ITS SOCIAL POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

CHINA:

ITS SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS LIFE.

FROM THE FRENCH OF

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CHINA:

ITS SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS LIFE.

PART I.

THE FAMILY.

It has been said by celebrated men, such as Pascal, Leibnitz and Bacon, that the human race may be likened to a single individual, never dying and always acquiring fresh knowledge; and this that they have asserted of humanity as a whole may, with equal truth, be applied to that section of it which we call a family.

Men of science are daily recording facts and observing events, a process to which they have given the name of Atavism, which go far to prove so close a connection to exist between one generation and another that there is but one step wanting to the unity and identity spoken of by Pascal, Leibnitz and Bacon, with whom may be included P. Leroux; and if what they have asserted of humanity at large is true

in the instance of a single family, it is *à fortiori* true of that larger family known as a nation.

Of all the nations of antiquity of which we have any record, one alone survives, and is thus the elder sister of all peoples now existing. But she is unknown.

It may, it is true, be asserted that as all nations inherit from their predecessors, so the origins of France, England and even Russia may be as remote as it is possible for the mind of man to conceive; but while modern races are but the collateral successors of those of antiquity, the one with which I propose to deal is the direct heir of the generations which erected it, and it is in this that its deep and original interest consists. Its history shows the phenomena of heredity in regular succession, neither modified nor obstructed by change of medium, with the evolution of events and ideas—an evolution as regular as that of living beings, freely proceeding unshaken, and untroubled by any exterior influence by which its direction might have been altered or its development retarded; and it is here, I repeat, that we find the deep and original interest of China, and perhaps also the secret of her extraordinary longevity.

The progress and organisation, in short the civilisation attained by humanity under such conditions of liberty of development, can scarcely fail to be an interesting study, and we propose to devote the following pages to its elucidation.

Civilisation, as commonly spoken of, has different meanings and objects, according to the sense in which the speaker employs the word. We speak of that State as most civilised in which on a given area the largest possible number of human beings are able to procure and distribute most equally among themselves the most well-being, liberty, justice and security; and we propose to deal firstly with the condition of China from these different points of view, and then with the means and principles under which that condition was attained.

I.

According to this order, the extent of the population first presents itself for examination, and this amounts in the whole Chinese Empire to 537 millions, including the nomad tribes of Mongolia, and the more or less subject tribes of the neighbouring regions of Thibet and Annam, and forms in the aggregate more than the third of the population of our planet. We propose, however, to limit the field of our inquiry to the territory of China properly so called, bounded on the east and south by the sea, by the mountains of Thibet on the west, and by the Great Wall on the north, where a population of 400 millions exists on an area of 825 million acres, or from six to seven times that of France.

Europe, on an area four or five times larger, contains scarcely 337 millions, while there are in China provinces as large as France and Germany, containing as many as three inhabitants per acre; and there are districts as large as Belgium, where the density of population reaches as high as six and even seven souls on each acre.

In this respect no country in Europe, excepting perhaps the island of Jersey and the province of Valencia in Spain, can compare with China, and the extent of the population seems so extraordinary that the accuracy of Chinese statistics has been frequently contested.

But no traveller who has been fortunate enough to cross the vast territory of the Chinese Empire can have any doubt on the point. I myself frequently passed through cities containing from 500 to 1,500,000 inhabitants even up to the frontiers of Thibet; while in the more distant provinces I travelled frequently with crowds proceeding to market, and blocking, to the number of fifteen to twenty thousand persons, roads on which perhaps on the previous evening an occasional innkeeper was the only person visible.

From one end of China to the other, so to speak, villages, hamlets and cottages followed each other so closely upon my line of route as to be comparable only to the suburbs of some of the great cities of Europe.

Frequently the water is converted into land, and the

lakes covered with gardens and fields resting upon rafts, while the rocks furnish their share towards the harvest. Sugar, silk, tea, wax, and other products requiring much toil and care in their cultivation, are found everywhere, and the fertility of the soil is such that even the distant valleys render a return of twelve to fourteen thousand kilogrammes of rice, and give the land a value of 25,000 to 30,000 francs for each hectare.

In regard to population, therefore, the Chinese far exceed us, and while we complain of the extent of ours, which we endeavour to restrain by wars, celibacy, and voluntary sterilisation, the Chinese continue to multiply as if the earth were without limits.

Correctly enough, they have no fear of the result, for the fertility of the land depends not upon its extent but upon the extent and value of the labour applied to it. An excellent proof of this is afforded by China, where the provinces now containing the largest number of inhabitants originally neither possessed nor were capable of supporting a larger population than the districts now most sparsely inhabited, and where barren mountains and rocks have been converted into regular terraces of flowers and fruits.

Nor must it be forgotten that the Chinese are most economical in their use of all fertilising products, nor do they waste what would augment the wealth of their country by allowing the contents of their sewers to poison their rivers, but carefully collect them, and believe

they are but obeying the laws of natural justice in carefully returning to the soil whatever they obtain from it.

Further, as roads, canals, and railways are less costly, the expenses of government less heavy, and waterways both larger and more easy of construction, in a thickly populated country, so it follows that in Chinese opinion an increase of population leads most surely to an increase of public and private wealth.

We may thence conclude that the expenses of a country are both in direct ratio to its extent and in inverse ratio to its population, and as a matter of fact, while the taxation in France amounts to 90 or 100 francs per head of the population, that of China comes to barely 3 francs. Even with this sum of taxation, innumerable and extensive public works are and have been constructed, and we may confess with shame that the roads, canals, railways, and other public works of the West, without taking into consideration their recent origin, compare very unfavourably with the innumerable canals, and with that wonderful and enormous hydraulic system of China which irrigates the land of the peasant over an extent of 800 leagues of country from the West to the sea. It may be objected that the Chinese individually enjoy but moderate prosperity, but the extent of population is almost sufficient answer, for we may conclude that if the Chinese were unhappy in their condition they

would, like us, have found some means of preventing an undue increase of their population, nor is there any more exact measure of the misery or well-being of a people than its criminal returns.

Here we have facts to deal with; and I can state that in Hankow, a town in which I lived for some time, only one murder took place in thirty-four years; and that in Chihli, a province containing 25,000,000 inhabitants, there were in 1866 to 1867 but twelve capital sentences. It should be noted that a third conviction for theft is punished with death, that no extenuating circumstances are admitted, and that Pekin, the capital of China, is situated in this province. The reader would be better able to judge of the condition of the Chinese population were I able to show him the small farms and the cottages of the peasants, who have so often extended their hospitality to me, and point out to him the cleanliness of the dwellings, the varnished furniture, and read over to him the records which I have collected of their wealth and resources.

I may quote the case of an individual owning a plot of land of the extent of three hectares and a half, who was able to save annually 1500 to 1800 francs, after providing for the subsistence of himself and his family; while another, farming one hectare, saved yearly from 700 to 800 francs. I wish also I could enable the reader to see them at their meals, sufficient in quantity, and composed of much more varied materials than those forming the subsistence of our field labourers,

while all, however poor their lodging may appear, are able to indulge themselves with a few cakes for dessert and to offer to a friend. Especially should I like to enable him to compare the light, frank and easy bearing of the first Chinese peasant he might meet with the heavy, overburdened, awkward and shame-faced demeanour of most of our small agriculturists and our petty farmers of Brittany, Sologne, Auvergne and Savoy, not to mention those of the South. Their very appearance shows that there exists between rich and poor, or rather the less well-to-do—between the countrymen and townsmen—much less distance and difference than among ourselves, and that there is amongst them an equality of long standing, in the atmosphere of which everyone moves and breathes easily, and which brings about a politeness and kindness in their relations with each other, with which a stranger cannot fail to be struck. The following example will show how they behave and speak to each other. Among the methods of locomotion employed in China, the most convenient in hilly districts where canals are rarely met with, is that of the coolie-chair or palanquin, in which I have travelled from six to seven hundred leagues.

Each palanquin requires four coolies, or porters, and a journey of eight or nine leagues a day can be easily accomplished, but every burden, even shared among four, becomes heavy in the long run, and this is a fact well known to the poor people of China. The following

conversation is an example of the behaviour of those whom we happened to meet on our journey. 'Sir,' they would say, addressing one of our porters, 'we have not been able to gain our livelihood to-day; will you allow us to take your place and relieve you for a little?' 'With pleasure, sir; but we earn little, and cannot pay you much.' 'Do not let that be a hindrance; we will leave that to you.' The chance bearers would then, for one or two leagues, take the places of the others who, relieved of their burden, sang as they followed us.

It should be remarked that this title of 'sir'—'sieu sen'—is only used between people unacquainted with each other; among intimates it is usual to add the term brother to what we should style the christian name. I should find it difficult to state how far this general politeness can extend towards the stranger, or the European who may have succeeded in obtaining the confidence of the Chinese—not an easy task to achieve, and one especially difficult at the time I first travelled in China. It was very shortly after our war with them, and after the execution of the treaty we forced upon them, and I suffered in consequence from a watchfulness on the part of the Chinese officials, which, however disguised, was the source of much inconvenience to me. But when once I had been able to persuade the authorities of the needlessness of this watchfulness in view of the inoffensive nature of my mission, and to obtain authority for my distant ex-

ploration of the districts bordering on Thibet, I hardly dare to tell the reader how the humble author of these pages was treated. Is not the right of pardon the highest and the most enviable of all the prerogatives of sovereignty? That right was mine. The authority of the officials of any village I might enter disappeared before the rank which had been conferred upon me. They continued to govern and to administer justice, but it was in my name, and on leaving the house I had temporarily made my home, I found the convicted prisoners of the previous day, for whom I could obtain sometimes a free pardon, sometimes a mitigation of sentence. But far preferable to these honours were the simple and cordial reception, and the quiet and humble hospitality shown me in the villages and hamlets.

Often, leaving our baggage in our palanquins or boat, with directions to meet us at the next stopping-place, we wandered alone among the fields and paths, without taking any further precaution than that of wearing our Chinese costume![1]

We used to walk leisurely, stopping as we liked and conversing with the first passer-by about the rain, the weather, the harvest, and kindred subjects. I remember well a certain tree, under which we had one day

[1] I was accompanied on one of my journeys by M. L. Bourret, who had been appointed by the French merchants of Shanghai, at my request, to study the commercial products of the countries I intended visiting.

seated ourselves, exhausted with heat and fatigue. There was a little grass, real grass—a very uncommon object among the universal cultivation of the plains of China—around its roots, which made us a most delightful seat, on which we stretched ourselves with the greatest comfort. We had, however, unfortunately not noticed two women, slightly hidden by some shrubs, working in a little garden close by, who had not seen us. It must be remembered that it is unusual for strange men to stop long in the presence of women, and we knew we were not in our proper place, but were unwilling to leave the shade for the sun. We tried to ward off the danger. 'Good-morning, ladies,' said the interpreter in his most seductive tones. 'Good-morning; but what are you doing there? Move on further.'

'But, ladies,' he observed, 'we are very tired, and the other trees are far off.'

'These are barbarians—they do not know how to behave. Move on further, and do not compel us to tell you again,' said one of our neighbours.

We rose, abashed and confused, to go, when the interpreter, recollecting himself and showing his pipe, said, 'At all events you will be good enough to give me a light.'

'If you will move on it shall be brought you,' was the reply.

We walked on slowly, and were soon overtaken by a small boy who brought us a light. I rewarded him

with a small knife worth about fourpence, and we sat down again a few steps further on. In a few minutes the child reappeared, bringing four oranges. I gave him a packet of sewing needles and he went away, but we were not long alone, as he soon returned, accompanied by an old man and two or three others, who addressed us politely and invited us to rest in their house. We readily accepted the invitation, and before an hour had elapsed we were the best friends in the world.

The women unconcernedly went on with their occupations in our presence. One brought some food while the other prepared the table, whilst we conversed with the villagers, who had by this time joined our hosts. The subject of our conversation was, so to speak, the East and West and all that is interesting and proper to man between these two points. We spoke of Europe, and of our relations, for it is always thus that a conversation commences, and at last we took our leave of these good people, carrying with us a recollection of the day which twenty years have been unable to efface.

Nor shall I ever forget the welcome I received from a poor Chinese peasant who had emigrated to the border of the desert of Gobi from Mongolia on the far side of the Great Wall. We were travelling towards a village named Li-Wang-tse, having left Chang-kia-kow about five o'clock in the morning, and up to eleven or twelve o'clock had been unable to find in that

dismal country a single place or house where we could stop for rest and refreshment.

We had certainly passed through several miserable hamlets, but either because the inhabitants were occupied out of doors, and for some other reason, scarcely a single person was to be seen.

At last towards midday we arrived in the midst of a group of houses rather more considerable than those through which we had passed, but also with their doors closed.

We were standing there, men and animals, in the teeth of the wind, asking ourselves whether we should not be compelled to camp under some wall, when we perceived a peasant hastening towards us, who accosted us much in the following manner :—

'This village, sir, is very small and we are very poor, and you will search in vain for a house fit to receive you. I myself am poor and unworthy, but if you will do your younger brother the honour of stopping at his house, he will do his utmost for you. The house is there.'

The house was somewhat larger than the neighbouring ones, and was extremely clean. He left us as soon as we had entered, and we saw him chasing fowls, when, guessing his intention, we begged him to desist, assuring him that we had all necessary provisions and only required shelter; not, however, before he had killed two.

We had some conversation within while our meal

was being prepared, and I could not help admiring his quiet and modest bearing and his manner of speaking, which was simple and dignified and respectful without being servile. When our meal arrived, he and his eldest son, a child of from ten to twelve years of age, attended upon us in such a charming manner that, in spite of myself, I could not help making comparisons which grieved me between them and the French peasantry.

When our meal was over and it was time to start I wished to bestow some remembrance of our visit upon our host, but I was unable to prevail on him to accept anything; all he asked for being leave to introduce his family, consisting of a little girl of four years old, and another of two, besides the boy who had helped his father to wait upon us.

These little ones were as polite in their manners as the best educated grown-up persons.

II.

It is the opinion of many Europeans that the government of China is essentially a despotism; but a country can scarcely be styled despotically governed where there are but from twenty-five to thirty-thousand officials to a population of five hundred

million souls, and where the government relies for support upon an army of a hundred thousand Tartars, almost lost in such a crowd.

As a matter of fact, the government and administration of China is carried on by the Chinese themselves; in the family by all the members of the family, and in the township by duly elected delegates, only presided over, so to speak, by the officials. Nor do they hesitate to dismiss the presidents should they have cause to complain of them, as they occasionally do after a somewhat original manner.

In one of the most populous departments of a province I once visited, the approaching arrival was announced of a prefect who had left an evil reputation behind him wherever he had been. The fact was well known, the people became excited, the Departmental Council was called together, and petition after petition was sent to the Viceroy begging him to reconsider his unfortunate choice.

The Viceroy, however, was obstinate, and it soon became known that the prefect was within a few leagues of the town. The Council thereupon reassembled, and caused a tent to be erected at the entrance of the city, where the usual repast and refreshments were prepared, and the customary escort ordered, while at the same time four palanquins with fresh and willing porters were made ready. On his arrival the prefect was courteously received, and invited to rest and refresh himself, being at the same

time plainly given to understand that the people would not receive him, that he could not be allowed to enter the town, and that three delegates of the Council intended to have the honour of escorting him on his return journey to the capital. This programme was carried out, and the ease with which it was accomplished shows plainly that, so far from being an exceptional instance, it was in accordance with the customs of the people. The opinion of their legislators and philosophers on this point is worthy of attention. The monarch, according to them, is but the mandatory of the people, and any sovereign conducting himself contrary to their well-being and will, is regarded by them as a calamity, and may be dethroned in spite of the authority he possesses. This has been laid down by Confucius, the greatest and most popular of their philosophers, moralists, and legislators.

The Chinese, however, possess not only political liberty, but liberty of conscience, religion and education, and among all ranks of their officials are found Mohammedans, Jews, and Christians, as well as Buddhists and men professing no religion in particular except that perhaps of ancestral worship.

The Government never meddles with religious questions unless they are mingled with civil matters, and interfere with the civil government. From time to time the Chinese need to mistrust religions, singular as it appears to Europeans, may be read in the instructions addressed to the people by the Emperor,

the viceroys, or the governors, and it is hence that the reproach of atheism levelled for a long time past at the Chinese nation has been derived. Farther on it will be seen that no reproach has less foundation. The Government is equally liberal in matters of public instruction. It is open to all to establish a school, and to avail themselves of it or not as they please; and it is worthy of remark, the reason of which will shortly be given, that there is scarcely a single Chinese who is unable to read, write, cast accounts, and draw. Those desirous of pursuing a literary career, the opening to the public service, are amenable only to examiners from the University of Pekin, which, though supported by the State, is absolutely independent of the Government. As far as freedom of meeting and association are concerned, I should imagine its right, at all events for several centuries past, has never been questioned by any Chinese Government. Public meetings take place, and associations are formed without notice or previous authority, and I believe that in no country in the world are associations of all kinds so frequent, so numerously attended, and so easy of access as in China. And in no country in the world, as I hope to show later on, do there exist such proofs of force and vitality as in China. Nor is there any limit to the freedom of the press. I made a collection during 1863, in the province of Sze-chuen, of proclamations of great violence against the Emperor and the Government after the execution of the treaty forced upon them by

the Europeans after the plunder of the Summer Palace and the burning of the great library. The mandarins were content with causing their removal, they did not dream of prosecuting the authors.

Nor do passports exist in China, nor licences on industries or trade. There is no octroi except a tax of from five to eight per cent. ad valorem levied on certain articles of foreign manufacture at the entrance to each town. We have here the most real and complete freedom of industry, calling, trade and thinking, that it is possible to imagine.

I have deferred mentioning until now one particular form of freedom, perhaps the most exalted and delicate of all, the most ennobling to the conscience of man, and the one which in my opinion contains all others, though perhaps to us Europeans the most difficult of comprehension. I allude to the power of self-judgment, or what may be termed self-jurisdiction. I shall explain shortly how it is exercised by the Chinese. I confine myself for the present to stating its existence; nor does the State interfere with its exercise unless especially called upon to do so; and a strong proof that its intervention is neither so necessary nor so frequent as might be supposed, exists in the absence of any special magistracy. It would be impossible to bring forward more complete proof of the freedom enjoyed by the Chinese people than this very absence of all judicial, priestly, scholastic, and military caste.

It has been stated above that there is nothing in my opinoin more capable of elevating the conscience, and developing the idea of justice, than the exercise of judiciary power.

It is well known that agriculture is, so to speak, the national profession of China, and that almost all Chinese may be said to be born peasants, while at all events there is not one who is not directly interested in the prosperity of agriculture. The cultivation of rice, which occupies two-thirds of the land, is the foundation of their agriculture, and this can only be carried on in water and by means of irrigation. Water being from its very nature easy to divert and steal, we may ask how it would be possible to cultivate rice without justice, and conclude that the regular distribution of water is in itself a proof of great loyalty to each other.

Michelet has laid it down that there can be no cultivation without order. Justice is born of the furrow; and Ceres, who at Thebes and Athens assembled the people and laid down the laws—Ceres, who seems no other than Themis—Ceres is the serious consideration of agricultural peoples. Nor is it only to rice that the Chinaman does justice, but to all the harvest, to the earth which produces, and to the buffalo and the ox which help him in his labours. He repeats the words of the ancient law of Russia, 'Do justice to a plant, bull and horse; be careful that the cow does not complain of you, and that you are not ungrateful to

the dog. The land has a right to be tilled, if neglected it becomes a curse, if manured it repays it with liberality. To him who has ploughed it from right to left and from left to right it will say, "May your fields produce copiously and your villages be numerous and abound in all requirements." ' The Chinaman repeats to himself, 'Work and sow; the man that sows with purity fulfils the law.'

Good faith or credit is another form of justice in the ordinary affairs of life. I can give several instances, as I was frequently compelled to refuse offers made to me by mandarins and rich inhabitants of loans without interest and on verbal security. 'Sir,' they would say to me, 'it is a long time since you left your fellow-countrymen, you are probably in want of money; if so, make use of us.' Once even I was obliged to return to a mandarin a sum of 8000 francs which, in spite of my having declined his kindness, he had caused to be placed in an out-of-the-way corner of my lodging.

That I was a foreigner shows all the more clearly the prevalence of the idea of moral credit among the Chinese; in Europe no foreigner would be compelled to decline a similar offer. In China, however, I expect such offers are not uncommon, and, of course, much more frequent between persons well acquainted with each other. It is also a common custom with Chinese banks to advance to any of their clients who may request it double the amount standing to their credit,

on current interest, for a term which may extend from three days to six months. But perhaps the best example of the extent to which the idea of personal credit extends among the Chinese is to be found in the numerous small societies of almost daily creation, which lend money without interest, or at low rates, to provide for all the wants of the people—the student too poor to complete his education; the peasant in need of a buffalo for his holding; the small shopkeeper starting in business; up to the mother desirous of providing for the marriage expenses of her daughter.

Another form of justice is that due to the infirm, mutes, blind and deaf, who may be termed the disinherited of the world, and who are to be found in China, though perhaps in less number than in any country in Europe. They are no more forgotten there than elsewhere, and I may say that the establishments provided for them, whether founded and supported by the State or by private charity, might well serve as models to countries where more is sacrificed to pomp and appearance than to the comfort of the inmates. I have seen instances in Chinese establishments of patients being allowed each a small enclosure of two rooms, with permission to have one of their relatives with them as a nurse.

Children abandoned by their parents are similarly treated; but so much has been said, and for the most part so wrongly on this subject, that I may be pardoned for devoting some space to it. According to

the agents of the 'Société de la Sainte-Enfance,' to give it its proper name, infanticide has been raised in China to the dignity of an institution, tolerated or even authorised by the laws, and contempt of human life has reached such a point, that parents have no hesitation in throwing to the pigs any of their children who may be a burden to them. Pictures illustrative of such stories are to be seen in the Catholic schools, and in some of the churches banners similarly decorated are occasionally displayed. These calumnies have, however, been frequently denied by missionaries in the last century, and by others now living, and I may especially refer to a letter from Father Amyot, a Jesuit priest, published about 1790 in the fourth volume of the *Mémoires Concernant les Chinois*, which should have brought a blush to the faces of the inventors of these stories, though so long as they bring in from five to six million francs per annum to the 'Société de la Sainte-Enfance,' it is unlikely they will be discontinued.

Speaking as one who passed ten years in China, and travelled through the country from north to south, and east to west, I can declare that I have never known a case of infanticide either in the places in which I have resided, or their neighbourhood. I do not say that such a crime is never committed, but I have no hesitation in asserting that it is much less common in China than in France, and that it is nothing short of an abominable and atrocious calumny to infer

the existence of an habitual and voluntary crime from a single accidental and involuntary instance of an infant being devoured by a pig; and in speaking so strongly I have no fear of being contradicted by any Europeans acquainted with China other than those interested in such fables.

There are also material facts which contradict these stories, and which a little reflection would show to be sufficient to demonstrate their falsehood. There is, for instance, the continual increase in the population of China, which consisted of 360 millions in 1812, and amounts now to 537 millions, and which in itself appears a sufficient and peremptory contradiction. Infanticide, furthermore, results generally from misery and births outside wedlock, and I have already dealt with the relative comfort and misery of the Chinese; while, if any further argument were necessary, I could assert that nowhere perhaps do there exist so few beggars as in China. There are certainly many in Pekin whose importunities are most distressing; but they are far below the 400,000 assisted poor of Paris, leaving out of consideration those making a trade of beggary.

In the country there are next to none, while in the towns of the interior, from information I have gathered, and from my personal observations, I do not believe the mendicants amount to more than from 20 to 25 among populations of from 150 to 200,000 souls.

As regards the second cause of infanticides, mentioned above, it may, as will shortly be shown, be said to be non-existent, marriage in China being from a social, political, and religious point of view so binding and sacred a duty that the number of bachelors above twenty-four years of age is hardly worthy of notice.

Although unavoidable famines might suddenly plunge families into misery, and compel them to consider a new birth as a disaster, there would still be no need for them to rid themselves of their children by death, since the necessity of abandoning them is considered such an extreme misfortune for the parents as not to be punishable by the State, and whilst there exist, as there have been from very remote antiquity, orphanages and establishments where such children are received, and kindly and sagaciously cared for. Such is the case in China, and it is a grave error to think that the children died like dogs in the streets previous to the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, and that there is no salvation, pity, or charity outside the Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church.

The reader must judge for himself; but before proceeding to explain the difference between the Catholic and Chinese systems as followed in their respective orphanages, I must repeat my opinion that, for the reasons here given, infants are more rarely abandoned or exposed in China than in France. I was informed in 1862 by Father Chevrier or Cherrier, a missionary

who was at the head of one of the institutions of La Sainte-Enfance at Tientsin, a town of more than 300,000 souls, that during the three years that had elapsed from its opening he had been unable to obtain a single child.

Furthermore, in China the abandonment of a child is not so definite as elsewhere, but often ceases with the causes which have brought it about; and as poverty is sometimes temporary and not lasting, so it very frequently happens that the parents are able to demand their children back from the orphanages. No difficulty is raised as to their return from the Chinese orphanages, but it is different with the Catholic, whence children once baptised cannot be given back to non-Catholic parents. Hence the story of the little Matara and the lamentable history of the massacre of the French at Tientsin in 1870, which was provoked by the refusal of the missionaries to return to their families children they had obtained after the inundation of the Yellow River. Nor must it be forgotten that the object of the Sainte-Enfance is not to save the children from temporal but from spiritual death, so that the ideal of this institution would be that every infant should die as soon as baptised, their surviving being simply impedimenta. A bishop, M. Baldus, remarked on this point to M. Delaplace, himself a bishop, who repeated the story to me, that 'an epidemic was much to be desired to relieve them of their orphans.' This was of course a

joke, but still a joke which could only have entered the mind of a Catholic missionary. The boys also are provided with situations in the different professions sufficiently lucrative to enable them to repay the cost of their maintenance to the Sainte-Enfance. It is different as regards the girls—there is little or no employment for them, and marriage is only permitted to them with Catholics. They are also more numerous than the boys, while the latter do not always remain Catholics, and thus the number of female orphans has become a considerable obstacle to the work of the Sainte-Enfance. It is quite otherwise in the Chinese orphanages, where rich people often seek children to adopt, or husbands for their daughters, or wives for their sons. Thus these orphanages, the expenses of which consist mostly of advances which they are liberally repaid, are in possession of very large resources which enable them to afford the children all possible care and comfort. This is so true that Father Dergy, a Jesuit missionary of Foo-chow, a town containing from five to six million souls, complained to me of the competition which the Chinese orphanage offered to the Catholic. 'It is much better off than we are,' he remarked; 'it is able to afford coffins to the little children who die there, while we can only wrap ours in a bundle of straw. It is also very difficult for us to obtain any children.'

There are other reasons also on which the missionary did not enlarge. Fewer infants by far die in the Chinese

orphanages than in the Catholic, because they are better and more intelligently cared for, and no nurse is allowed to take charge of more than one child; while in the Catholic orphanages three or four, or, according to a medical friend of mine who witnessed the case at Macao, even more are allotted to one woman; nor does it ever happen that a living child is mistaken for dead, and thus buried, as must have occurred near where I lived, but for the unforeseen presence of the bishop, M. Delaplace, who saved the child.

Such an occurrence cannot be unfrequent, considering the little care shown for the children by the Sainte-Enfance. Let them go to Heaven, and as soon as possible, seems to be her motto.

I have omitted two points which may, up to a certain point, explain the exaggerations current on the subject of infanticide, and which are described in the letter of the Jesuit whose name I have given. The first is the necessity under which the Sainte-Enfance finds itself compelled to rely blindly upon the assertions of the midwives, whether Catholic or not, who are authorised to baptise still-born children, and who receive from twenty to twenty-five centimes for each baptism; while, as no control is possible, it is not to be wondered at that they should be tempted to claim larger sums than they have earned, laying upon the custom of infanticide the blame of a larger mortality than they could otherwise explain.

The second cause of exaggeration is the practice

adopted by poor families, of exposing their dead children, in order that their burial may be undertaken by the orphanages. The Sainte-Enfance forms the opinion that these children die from violence, but it is a hypothesis quite without foundation.

In dealing with infanticide and the Sainte-Enfance I have been drawn somewhat out of the order I had arranged to follow, but it was difficult to speak of infanticide without provoking many questions. I wished to reply to them once for all, and I hope the digression has not been useless.

To return directly to my subject, I should now occupy myself with the question of security of life and property, but I could add little to what I have already said without trenching on what I shall have to say later on. I will therefore pass on at once to another matter.

III.

In China, as in other countries, the bases of the social edifice are property and the family, while of these property, by which land is understood, is the more important. The township rests upon the hearth, but it is on the soil that the hearth is built, and unless the foundation is firm, all must fall.

On the other hand, the soil supports humanity; if it is not free, death is the result. In short, it is by the labour and industry that man bestows upon it that the soil shares in the personality of the individual; to violate this is robbery.

In China, as elsewhere, property in land underwent transformation as the evolution of the human race proceeded, being collective at the period when the existing population was still tribal, pastoral, or at most half agricultural, and becoming individual, as with the increase of population, agriculture increased in extent. Subsequently, between the first century before our era and the third century A.D., reactionary measures were taken, resulting from abuses of individual right, which it would take too long to explain now, and, in many cases, property again became collective, and was placed in the hands of individuals, who were directed to administer it for the common benefit.

The inevitable result followed, and these administrators took upon themselves the status of chiefs, and made themselves masters of the land which had been entrusted to them, becoming lords of the soil, and condemning the others to a miserable condition of vassalage. At last, after many painful experiments, between the third and seventh century of our era property underwent a last transformation, and became at the same time collective and individual. It is in this form that it exists to-day.

Before proceeding to deal with the constitution, I

must explain in what Chinese collectivism consists. According to the Chinese, humanity is a whole, a unity which the words ancestors, living, and posterity cannot divide, while the three tenses, past, present, and future, which mark its existence, are incapable of affecting its everlasting solidarity, or its everlasting interests. Thus the unity and oneness of the human race which are found at the base of other civilisations, but are there contradicted by the idea we have of individual death and salvation, exist in China on the condition of being eternal; and in order the more strongly to affirm their method of conceiving this unity and oneness, they go so far as to suppress one of the moods, and speak of the living and their posterity as the future ancestors, endeavouring thus to expel from their minds the idea which divides the everlasting humanity.

They go even further than this, as since they would be unable to comprehend a oneness of humanity resulting otherwise than from identity of generations, they had at one time, and in some places still have, a custom of causing the corpse to be represented by a child, to whom the honours reserved for the corpse are rendered, which is thus made to seem again to live in the child.

The soil does not in Chinese opinion belong only to the living, as they do not admit that labour and the additional value it gives can absorb the fee-simple. The living, an ephemeral part of humanity, have no

right in their opinion to squander the advantages handed down to them from the past, nor the right to use or abuse a part of the common property. They are, on the contrary, only the stewards of posterity, and at one time uncultivated property was confiscated. Property in land is in fact a right of usufruct, and this right, called by the Chinese *tien-mien*, is all that can be bequeathed or alienated. The fee-simple, *tien-ti*, remains the property of the community, or collectively as represented by the State, which asserts its right by levying a tax, or rent. Thus a person selling or letting a plot of ground receives only a price or a rent, representing the value which he and his predecessors have by their labour added to the land. The State or community, on the other hand, has never arrogated to itself the right of increasing the tax on the fee-simple on account of an increased surface value. The tax on the fee-simple was fixed according to the area, and not according to the value, and is never altered. It is almost the only tax in China.[1]

Labour, and the result of labour, is held in such respect, that no consideration will allow of its being affected either by an increase of rent, or by the creation of other taxes. The particular tax referred to

[1] The other resources of the empire include the revenues of the customs, those of the mines, and the salt monopoly.

The private revenues of the Emperor, constituting his civil list, are furnished by a portion of the salt monopoly, by his herds in Mougolia, and by states tributary to China.

certainly falls upon labour, but it should be remembered that it is only through its means that the State has been able to carry out the extensive systems of roads and canals, which in their turn offer to individual labour, facilities, without which, its development would be difficult.

Although the land tax is, as has been stated, calculated upon the area, the comparative facility for landed improvements is taken into due consideration, and land situated in the plains, and in non-irrigated portions of the mountains, pays a lower tax than irrigated land, while reclaimed ground is exempted from all taxes for a certain time before entering either of the four principal classes. There is, however, no other basis of classification, as although of course the products of the north are those suited to a colder, and those of the south to a warmer climate, in the end the two are of almost equal value. Wheat, for instance, is produced in less bulk than rice, but it is more valuable, and it is found that wheat land can afford to pay as much as rice.

The State in China may be likened to a house-owner who, after dividing his house into different floors, fixes the rents he demands, according to their several advantages, without concerning himself about the resources and industries of his tenants.

The land tax varies, according to the class, from 1 franc 50 centimes to 5 francs per hectare, covering all demands, taxes, *corvée*, and charges, and

does not amount to more than 3 francs per head of the population. Thus, for this moderate amount, every Chinaman is perfectly free to undertake any industry or trade he prefers, and to go where he pleases.

He has no taxes on doors, or windows, no patent or excise duties and no town dues to pay, he has no formalities to fulfil, no hindrance to dread. He is as free as the air he breathes.

This simple tax may in fact be called the security for his freedom, and I shall shortly show with what religious duty he pays it.

Any other tax would be considered by the Chinese as directly injurious to labour, and there is nothing which surprises them more than to learn that they exist in other countries. As capital and savings are derived from labour, so all revenues tend to stimulate and develope it, while to tax either tends to reduce their usefulness, to weaken the methods of acquiring the products of the soil, and to lessen the requirements of commerce and industry—that is, either to diminish the value of property in the hands of the seller, or to elevate it unduly to the detriment of the purchaser.

The Chinese tax, the metrical tax, while relieving commerce and industry of all special taxes, has the great advantage of exciting these two branches of human activity to wonderful energy and power.

There are very few industrial products which the

Chinese do not manufacture at a lower price than we can, and very few European goods which they do not sell cheaper than we are able to do. I have often seen English, French, and German goods on sale in their shops at a third lower price than would be asked by our shopkeepers, while I have bought gaiters and felt hats of Chinese manufacture for seventy-five centimes or one franc for which I should have had to pay at least three francs in Europe.

Chinese taxation is therefore not only a security for freedom, it is also an instrument of progress, so that it may be said that although it is advanced by the cultivators of the soil, they are in their turn repaid by the general progress of the country, while the tax itself is so equally spread over the whole population as to be scarcely sensible to each inhabitant. The Chinese tax is also an instrument of justice, the principle which caused its acceptance, that of the respect due to labour, prevailing equally among the private contracts between landowners and their tenants.

However great may be the improvements effected by a tenant in his holding, the landowner cannot require from him an excess of rent over that laid down by this principle, while if the cultivator desires to surrender the land he is entitled to compensation for the enhanced value created by his labour.

The Chinese system has thus produced results on which I cannot enlarge without exceeding the limits

of this work. I will therefore content myself with enumerating them.

It has, for instance, the advantage of facilitating the acquisition of land by those desirous of cultivating it themselves, while it acts as a deterrent to those wishing to make use of it as an investment or speculation, as the tax being levied upon the area, the soil is depreciated in value to its amount while it remains in the hands of inactive proprietors, but retains its full value to those devoting their labour to it. It is in fact but a fixed rent paid to the State instead of to inactive owners, and while assuring to the producers the benefit of all improved value resulting from their labour, it stimulates at the same time their industry and the fertility of the land to an extent often of giving an additional value to the land over the fee-simple of from 4000 to 15,000 or 20,000 francs per hectare, and of enabling several harvests to be gathered in the same year.

Thus the Chinese system encourages the people to remain upon the soil, instead of dissuading them from cultivation and driving them towards the towns, as is the effect of the European systems, and, in short, favours the development of a peasant proprietorship. This is easily proved by dividing the total area of China by the number of families, which is about 90,000,000. The average extent of each holding will thus be found to consist of three and a half hectares. As there is a large number of families which do not own more than one

and a half hectare, or even a half hectare, the difference goes of course to increase the property of the richer classes.

I do not think, however, there are many families whose holdings exceed twenty hectares, while there are very few amounting to 100 hectares, and properties above that limit may be said to be non-existent.

In each province containing from 30,000,000 to 40,000,000 inhabitants it would be difficult to find three or four properties of 300 to 500 hectares, while in all cases those most carefully cultivated do not exceed twelve hectares.

Landed property in China does not possess alone the quality of common ownership conferred upon it by the system of taxation. Whether the legislator wished to prevent any recurrence of the error which led former administrators to believe that the rights over the common domain were concentrated in them, and a consequent return to the despotism which followed, or for some other reason, he has within certain limits conferred upon the improved value of property the same privilege of non-alienation which attaches to the national land. Every family or individual once in possession of a parcel of soil, found it privileged in this manner, though in continually diminishing proportions, and thus, while exercising the rights of the community, became a guardian of the soil in right of the fraction of humanity which it represented. These plots of inalienable land amounted originally to thirty

hectares; they are now no more than three-quarters of a hectare, and are styled patrimonial land.

From seventy to seventy-five of the 330 millions hectares constituting the soil of China are held in this manner. The patrimonial land not only assures his liberty to each individual Chinaman, and guarantees him against a return to despotism, but, as we find in one of the canonical books of China, 'the worship of Heaven has as its end the spiritualisation of the earth.'

I cannot say whether this end is finally attained; but I cannot help remarking that the Chinese seem at all events on the road leading to it, having regard to the character of the institution of patrimonial land—inalienable and inviolable, almost human, as sacred as man, and no more for sale than he.

The house, hearth, and homestead, rest on the patrimonial land, and it is upon it, if the family has sufficient means for the purpose, that its burying-place is situated, and a hall erected in which the ancestral worship is performed twice a month, and judgment passed upon any pleadings offered, or faults, shortcomings, or crimes committed by its members, while it is there that the archives and civil registers are kept. Close to the hall or temple, a school and library are established for the children belonging to the family and neighbourhood.

Nothing now is easier than to imagine a picture of the aspect of rural property, and of the appear-

ance it gives to the country. The forests have disappeared under the efforts of a population of great density, and have been replaced by villages as numerous and crowded as those in the suburbs of our large towns.

In the intervals a number of little hamlets have been built on small plots of land, never exceeding in extent 7½ acres, in the centre of which stand the houses surrounded by the patrimonial land, planted with trees and shrubs. The cottages almost touch each other, and are even more closely connected by the fact that the inmates of the smaller receive from the larger, from whence they spring, the ready assistance of the best possible form of association.

Every hamlet or group of cottages is constituted upon a system ensuring to the inhabitants not only a school, mayoralty, and family tribunal, but also supplying their wants of labour—buffaloes, a mill, and store-house, which the size of their holdings would not afford them. Each is, nevertheless, in his own home as much master of and respected in his home, as independent of his neighbours and the State, and more secure in his inviolable little cottage, than the most powerful baron was in France during the middle ages. There are certainly countries more majestic, more splendid, more striking from a picturesque point of view, but nowhere is Nature more touching, more sympathetic. Here and there the gentle slopes of the hills are covered with clumps of bamboo, with their

light and graceful foliage. Round the fields and houses plantations give the country the charming character of the country-side of the Loire, or in some districts the aspect of our birches growing upon mountains.

There are yet some remains of the old forests in the neighbourhood of the pagodas and on a few summits but the especially noticeable point is the presence of flowers everywhere. Purple azaleas, rhododendrons, scented gardenias, and glycinas hide the steeper slopes, while roses, chrysanthemums, and a number of other plants which we know because they come from China, flourish and give out their scent at all seasons of the year round the cottages. Nowhere else does the visitor feel himself so intimately acquainted with his surroundings. It would be vain to search for the sad, resigned and sometimes despairing notes of our northern workmen, in the songs which are heard in the hamlets at the hour of rest.

There are no legends in China of the terrors of flooded forests, and of terrible and frozen peaks. All these are relegated to the back of the Great Wall, to Mongolia and further still to the pole in Siberia. The most popular air in China, the 'Sinfa,' is soft, lively and full of peace and security, and there is no trace either in it or in any other air, or, as has been stated, in any legend, of a struggle against the implacable elements. Nor is there any trace of the sufferings of our serfdom, or of the agony and tortures of our wars of religion.

During twelve hundred years at least the singers have enjoyed a quiet which we shall not have long in France. And on this united base, affected neither by remorse for lost time and trouble, nor irritating memories, nor hopes of vengeance and reprisals, has been founded a code of public manners, the most calculated to assure to all and every one an amount of comfort from which we are still far removed in Europe.

Reverting to the matter in hand, I may remark that there is no family in China which does not possess its patrimonial land.

It is held as inviolable, and the individual through whose instrumentality the unwelcome stranger enters is regarded as having committed sacrilege, while any member of the family who may cause the intervention of the State is accursed and excommunicated, while his name is erased from the family records.

A governor or general who may have allowed one of the hearths committed to his charge to fall into the hands of the enemy commits suicide.

So much for the soil on which rest the hearth, the family, and the town. I shall now proceed to speak of the family itself.

IV.

Having by the everlasting solidarity of generations established the immortality of the soul, the Chinese considered it contradictory that its separation from the body should cause it to lose any of its attributes. The soul has its memories and still loves. United with the other souls of the house, and awaiting the time of its reappearance upon the earth, it hovers with them over the family, suffers and rejoices with it. If forgotten it becomes sad, it complains, and its complaints are warnings; unhappy is he who neglects it; he who neglects to do proper reverence to the soul of his father cannot think of his own, while a soul no longer worshipped loses its sense of justice, and without justice there can be no prosperity. The souls of ancestors must not be forgotten, and it must be made impossible that they should be forgotten, and as no one can perform this duty if the family becomes extinct, it follows that marriage is the first duty of all.

Thus, so far from chaining, as has been often said, the living to the dead, ancestral worship is on the contrary a source of progress and its strongest incentive, since in preparation for the future consists its most pressing duty. The past which exists no more for us, the present which passes away, the future

which is not as yet, here united in one idea, become the most marvellous and life-giving of realities. On every side the same pressing and touching prayer is heard: 'See that our memory does not perish, and that we may some day live to honour your spirit, and to bless your memory.' The tomb lies upon the cradle; from both an incessant invocation arises to life. Here we have no longer the mythical religions of India and Egypt, but the virile self-assertion of man responsible for his own salvation, and himself the maker of it: of man victorious over death and oblivion —the perpetual resurrection of humanity itself, conscious of its efforts and its destinies.

Thus the family institution becomes a true religion, which, though having nothing but the earth in view, is assuredly not without its greatness, without affecting the more comprehensive and elevated worship connecting the creature with the Creator, of which I shall speak later.

We must not forget that for the Chinaman there is no penalty more terrible than exclusion from his family community, none that so affects his imagination. To relieve himself from this nightmare he is ready to make any sacrifice, even that of his life. I lay especial stress upon this point. Driven from the domestic hearth, he goes lost in the crowds of the seaports, ready to undertake the most painful labour, to live as best he can, to submit willingly to the most extreme privations. He surrenders his liberty, and

may be seen on the most distant shores, a wandering soul for life, undergoing all the scorn, harsh treatment, and sufferings of the exile; indifferent to all, except —at all events among the larger proportion of immigrants to America and Europe—the fixed idea of gaining rehabilitation by his labour. It is from among these excommunicated souls that almost the whole of the immigration to all parts of the world, except that between Thibet, the sea, and the Great Wall, is recruited. The number of Chinese annually leaving China thus limited is estimated at 130,000, and of these 50,000 are believed to return. According to these figures the number of those rehabilitated is sufficiently great.

Nevertheless, many die without having obtained their reintegration, many probably without having earned it; but there are others who, convinced of the pardon of their near ones, too miserable to live in foreign countries, slay themselves in order to enter more speedily the bosom of their family.

I now come to the relative positions of the father, mother, and children. Originally, and up to the dynasty of the Tang, about 600 years before our era, the father, as in Rome, possessed the power of life and death, though even then side by side with the laws. While there were laws which consecrated this power, there existed others which mitigated it, and parents whose children died from evil treatment suffered punishment. This period exists no longer;

from the time of Confucius—that is to say, 400 years before Christ—the personal absolute power has become collective, the chief of the family being, so to speak, no more than its representative or executive officer. All decisions of any moment must be taken before an assembly of the family. Confucius even directs children to make as many as three representations to their parents when they see them on the point of committing a mistake or fault. Thus, although the ancient laws are still to be found in Chinese books, since there exists a great objection to their repeal or alteration, they may be considered as abrogated by custom. The father cannot alone pronounce a judgment or celebrate ancestral worship, while the mother can take the place of the father in all ceremonies except those of religion, in which, however, she should assist her husband. It is her part to present to him the offerings with which he does homage to ancestors, and in former times her assistance was indispensable from a religious point of view. Now her place is often taken by a relation. But she, like her husband, presides over the family assemblies and their verdicts. The Empress may become regent, and the Emperor, even when of full age, continues to render her the same duties which every Chinaman owes to his mother. She is the purse-bearer in most families, and provides her husband daily with his pocket-money, while no expenses are incurred without her opinion. At the father's death she takes charge of the house, unless she prefers to

hand over its direction to a grown-up son, if there is one. She takes a double share of the property with the children if there is a division; but this is merely a life interest, which she loses if she re-marries. If a widow without children, she retains a life interest in the entire property, but does not succeed to the ownership of it unless her husband has expressed his wish to that effect. If the wife be barren, or bears daughters only, her husband may take a second wife, because it is necessary before all things to make sure of succession to the family for purposes of worship; but the children of the latter are considered as those of the first, who is the one legitimate wife. It is unnecessary to add that the children of the second wife have all the rights of those of the first.

Adoption is common among families without children, or where it is not desired to incur the expense of a second wife, who must be provided with a reasonable dowry if dismissed. Boys and girls have not the same position in the family. When at the death of the father the eldest son is grown-up, he takes his father's place in the ceremonies of worship, and by the desire of his mother in other observances. If he is a minor, it is the uncle or the nearest relative. The eldest son has charge of the patrimonial land, but all the other children continue to live there during the lifetime of the father, and to share the produce. If there be other property it is equally divided among the sons, excepting the double share I have spoken of

as reserved for the mother. Should one of the sons leave the common domicile to seek his fortune elsewhere, he is bound to furnish the community with the produce of his toil and industry, unless it has been dissolved by division of the property, in which case he has no obligation towards it, and it has none towards him.

The dissolution of a community is postponed as long as possible, and never takes place until the children are of full age; more often it comprises several generations. There are many which have existed for several centuries. The dissolution of a community can only take place by consent of all, and in all cases the division of property among those possessing rights is performed without legal or other cost. The married sons alone have a right to deliberate on family matters, though the other children have a right to be consulted.

If the women were permitted to inherit, the fixity of the domestic hearth would be endangered, the latter might even pass to a strange family, or at all events the consequent diminution of the males' shares would postpone or compromise the formation of other hearths. The women, therefore, are excluded from inheritance. They possess only the right, on their marriage, to a small dowry in silver or furniture, which the father or brothers give them, according to their fortune and generosity. The least of these dowries consists of a cupboard, and a small outfit. If

the bride has no dowry, it is the duty of the bridegroom to provide one, which becomes the bride's property. The husband must, at all events, supply the bed. The women possess compensatious for their want of inheritance which they have not elsewhere. As long as they remain in the family, the girls are treated like the boys; when married they retain no rights in their own family, but recover them in that of their bridegrooms. These rights are insured to them by betrothal alone, should the death of the bride take place before the date of the marriage, and she wish to remain faithful to his memory. It often occurs that the future parents-in-law themselves re-marry the *fiancée* or widow of their son, as if she were their daughter, to a man without fortune, and adopt the children of this marriage.

Statistics show the difference between the number of male and female births in China amounts only to from two to three per cent., the preponderance varying in favour of one or the other in different provinces. As ancestral worship makes marriage a sacred duty for every male, it will be seen that the lot of women is sufficiently assured. The mention of the bridal, to which I have alluded, leads me to speak of the education which children receive in the family. Young persons are frequently betrothed from their infancy, are reminded during adolescence of the engagements made in their name, and are caused to accept them and to love each other. The bridegroom feels himself

married many years before the event; after that, life has no longer for him that vague, uncertain, distant end it possesses for the children of other civilisations —it is precise and present to him, and his thoughts are cleared and penetrated by it. All that surrounds him receives a value which nothing else could give him, and he learns what life is with its duties, responsibilities, and its joys. The young girl suffers none of the restlessness, sadness, and exhaustion, which overwhelm her in other civilisations, and too often hand her over, without defence, to all temptation. This is how the child learns to learn in China. It should be remarked that, having once awakened his intelligence to the real meaning of things, great pains are taken to avoid counteracting or paralysing the efforts made by false information. Nothing serves as a pretext for disguising from him the truth as soon as he is old enough to understand it.

The result of this system of education is a precocity of judgment, astonishing to a European, but in no way shocking, and one which it is difficult to avoid admiring in serious conjunctures. Nor does this precocity exclude any of the charms of infancy and youth. The Chinese do not believe that ignorance is the best method of preserving innocence, nor the greatest of all charms; they endeavour to obtain them from other sources, and in their opinion the purest of these is mutual respect. By never deceiving their children they show them the respect in which they hold them,

while modesty is the form in which they exact it from them. 'A well-brought-up child,' they say, 'does not accost the schoolfellow of his father unless accosted, does not speak to him except to answer him, and leaves him only when permitted to do so.'

'Honour like your father all persons double your age, and like your eldest brother any one ten years your senior.'

There does not exist the same familiarity between parents and children as with us, but there is more real equality. Care is taken to prove it, by the esteem in which the opinion of the children is held, the expression of which is often solicited; while this equality tends, without their becoming aware of it, to increase their respect for themselves. This first point once arrived at, the other objects of education are, in Chinese opinion, humanity, justice, obedience to rites and usage, right-feeling and sincerity. This constitutes the base of their education. These are the feelings which they inculcate upon youth, and endeavour to strengthen at all ages, and they consider that the young man who has them sufficiently developed, is ripe for the family and the town, and possesses the qualities essential to the functions and duties which they impose upon him.

But, in order to explain, now that I have detailed all the elements, how the family observances are carried out, I propose to introduce the reader into the hall at the time of the assembly. I must first say a

word on certain portions of their belief, which, without forming an essential part of the family religion, are nevertheless auxiliary to it.

I have stated that the Chinese do not consider all relations as interrupted by death, nor do they think that the separation is either precipitate or immediate. According to them, it is for several days only apparent, and even after the body has become cold the soul is not far distant. It may re-enter its earthly covering, or, at all events, it hovers near it with regret at the severance. The burial rarely takes place before three months have elapsed, and for the first few days the whole family implores the soul to return, employing the most touching appeals and even reproaches. They point to its empty place, which is always reserved for three months, and once a fortnight during the succeeding year.

At last the body is conveyed to the burial-place of the family, or, should there be no patrimonial land, to a common cemetery, where it remains only until such land can be obtained. The name of the deceased, the date of his birth and death, are inscribed on a tablet of lacquered wood; and immediately after the burial, which is fixed for one of the days of assembly, this tablet is placed on a socket in the hall of ancestors. This is where, twice a month, or at least once, meetings of the family are solemnly celebrated.

Against the wall at the end of the hall stands a long table of varnished wood, occupying almost the entire

length of the wall and forming an altar. On this altar are placed steps supporting, in the order of their dates, the tablets inscribed with the names of the ancestors. Hanging on the wall immediately above is the sign of the Divinity. In front of the tablets torches and pastilles are kept burning.[1] At a little distance from the altar stands a common square table surrounded with seats; in the middle of this table is a register, flanked by books on either side.

Every one wears his holiday garments and attends. The father and mother, who have prepared themselves by fasting the previous evening, enter, followed by two acolytes, and place themselves before the altar. They address a short invocation to Heaven while the assistants sing the usual hymn to the ancestors—but why should I describe what all the world knows, and in which is wanting nothing of the ceremonial usual in Buddhist or Christian prayers. There is nothing new in invocations to Heaven—prayers, offertories, meditation, genuflexions, songs, and music. In China these date from the origin of worship, from the beginning of centuries, so to speak.

One thing is different: the object of worship, which in China is humanity itself—that is to say, its spiritual and immortal part, the ancestral soul with which

[1] In the Oriental section of the Art Exhibition of 1882, M. Bing showed a beautiful altar of ancestors, of small size, such as the Chinese, not rich enough to afford a special hall, keep in their best room.

will some day unite those of the living, or future ancestors.

In other religions the object of worship is outside conscience; in the Chinese it is conscience itself, as I shall shortly prove. In other respects the thought is identical; how in fact can it differ, rising as it does to God himself? It is thus that the officiating worshipper begins. Then during the hymn of the ancestors he evokes their soul.

'It is well known,' said the Emperor Kang-Hi to the legate of the Pope, Cardinal Tournon, 'that the souls of the ancestors cannot come to inhabit the tablets on which their names are inscribed, but we try to persuade ourselves we are in their presence.'

Various offerings may be made, a pigeon, or a fowl, fruits, wine, cereals, rice, or corn, according to the agriculture of the district, or perhaps rice, corn, or wine alone. Two acolytes bring the offerings, the wife takes them and hands them to her husband, who, having raised them above his head, lays them upon the altar in token of gratitude.

The father then reads the names of the ancestors inscribed on the tablets, and having recalled them individually to the recollection of the family, he summons them from the tomb, and speaks in their name.

The grain and wine which he has previously consecrated to them as symbols of accomplished effort and realised progress, he returns in the name of the ancestors to the assistants as a sign of the indissolu-

bility of their union. The official then exhorts the family to meditate on the meaning of this communion, on the engagements which it implies and which all are sworn to fulfil; and after a last prayer, a meal is served at which the consecrated offerings are consumed.

Such is the worship properly so called of the family. But it is only the first part of the ceremony.

In the second part, the father, seated between his wife and the two eldest of his family, before the square table, on which are placed the books I have mentioned, opens first the one in the centre.

It is the family record, and consists of several volumes, containing in one entries relating to civil life, births, marriages, deaths, &c.; in the others, the family judgments, praises of the dead, their biographies and wills.

It may readily be called the sacred book, the Family Bible. It is not only the proof of its spiritual and temporal existence, it also alone attests the civil status of each Chinaman, and is received as evidence by the authorities when necessary. There is in my opinion no more noble and striking sign of the emancipation and independence of the man and citizen.

For these reasons it is kept with a care which saves the State from all interference and control, I might say of all interest, save that which it has in knowing the number of families and individuals.

The family book, which every Chinaman must some

day keep, demands a certain amount of education. He must know how to read and write. It is the first of all conditions, and the first of all duties. For this reason a school and a library is always, when possible, attached to the hall of ancestors, which thus becomes a true temple maintained by the wealthy among the family. Returning to the meeting, the father, having opened the first book, inscribes in it the events which have taken place; it is there that the marriages, if there are any, receive their consecration from the father and mother with solemn rites. Then taking another volume, he reads, or causes one of the assistants to read, the biography of one of the ancestors. On this he comments, drawing attention to the titles the subject of the memoir possesses to the recollection of posterity, and exhorts his hearers to follow the example he has given.

A new biography is read at each meeting until all are exhausted, when the series is recommenced, so that every one soon knows them by heart, and not one of the more meritorious ancestors is unknown. There are few even humble peasants who are ignorant of the history of their family for several centuries. Then is read, in a Chinese Plutarch—the libraries being very rich in books of this nature—the life of an illustrious man belonging to that or some other province, then a chapter from some moralist or philosopher, and lastly a few articles from the law.

These lectures finished, as well as the comments and explanations to which they give rise, the object of the meeting changes, and the family is transformed into a council, or if necessary into a tribunal. The father again takes the family history, and addressing himself to those present, inquires if any one is indebted to the public taxes; this is the first question, since the entire family would consider itself dishonoured were one of its members in arrears with the State, giving an official the right to make a demand. If such should be the case, the necessary advances are made to the individual in arrear.

The second question is whether any of the members of the family has any litigation, or difference of moment, with another family, in order that steps may be taken for its peaceful solution, or if needful, for the appointment of arbitrators. Lastly, any differences existing in the family itself are inquired into. Should a misdemeanour or crime be in question, the accused is at once separated from the others present, for trial, or, if information has to be obtained or proofs collected, he is remanded to the next or a special meeting.

It has already been stated that an appeal lies from the judgments of these tribunals to those of the State, but so great is the respect in which they are held that this right is very seldom availed of. I have known a married man, thirty-two years of age, the father of three children, who had been sentenced to three months in irons by his family tribunal, himself tender his

legs to a European who had been chosen to carry out the sentence, in order to spare a junior relative. Even officials are amenable to their family tribunals for acts committed by them in their public capacity which would escape the laws.

The penalties inflicted by domestic tribunals are: whipping, exile, and excommunication. Crimes involving the penalty of death must be adjudged upon by the State tribunals, but as their intervention would be considered a violation of the family integrity, it is usual to allow the culprit the choice between excommunication and suicide. There are few who do not prefer the latter.

Such, in one of its divisions, is the system to which it seems to me that China owes its moral and material prosperity.

To complete the study, I shall shortly enter upon an examination of first principles, the deep sources of its civilisation, and explain the broader and more general institutions arising out of those I have just mentioned—the religion of the family becomes that of humanity: labour raised to the dignity of a worship.

I shall have finally to speak of the State, and its conduct. These will be the subject of the succeeding chapters. In the meantime, there are a few observations I may offer here. What I have said of the condition of women in China is directly at variance with the accounts given by many travellers of the

inferiority in which they are placed by law and custom, but the travellers in question have omitted to notice the contradiction they have already given themselves, by deriding the Chinese for their soft, polished, feminine manners—a quality which most marks the influence of woman. The truth is that, without being as apparent as in Europe, the place of Chinese women in their own civilisation is at least as considerable, and their power as great as in other civilised countries. She it is who by marriage, makes a man a citizen and gives him his value. She is not overwhelmed with flattery as in France, but is more respected, and is married instead of being allowed to fall into misery and abandonment. Man does not in China claim rights for her which nature and her weakness render her incapable of exercising or defending, but each is accustomed from early infancy to consider himself as responsible for the lot of one woman.

The reader can form his own judgment on these two methods of dealing with the question.

Another matter on which I have a few words to say is no less important.

Humanity, I said at the beginning, is like a man always living and always acquiring knowledge, and I added this was equally true of a family as of humanity.

It may then be imagined what a man would become, who, surviving for centuries, should retain his recollection of the periods, events, experiences, and revolutions

which passed beneath his observation, and the superiority he would acquire over his contemporaries, and the degree of power to which his personal individuality would be raised. Imagine a nation composed of such men, and ask yourself whether the Chinese with their ancestral worship do not form such a nation, ending as they do each of their domestic ceremonies by the study of the biography of one of their forefathers, and of the great men of the country. Stated thus, nothing more surely tends to the unity and solidarity of a people than the proper study of tradition. The common proverb, 'Happy is the people that have no history,' is false. We are, as a consequence of having been, and there can no more be a nation without a history than a man without previous infancy and youth. A nation without a history would not be a nation, and it is essential that each should study the history of his own country, since if he does not do so, the history would be as non-existent, and would bear no fruit. The man ignorant of history wilfully places himself outside his own country, and loses his nationality. History should be raised to the dignity of a worship, and there can be no better or more practical means of doing this than to cultivate the proper traditions of each family, as is done in China. There can be no family, however humble, whose annals, considered with care and respect, do not form part of national history.

There is no history of France at the same time

truer and more familiar, more particular and more general, more human and touching than the history of a peasant. Nor is this all. There are few men who, having arrived at the ordinary term of existence, and looking backwards on their lives, do not see success and reverse almost equally mingled in their career; and there would be none at all if life, instead of the small duration of human existence, embraced several centuries.

This forms the domestic teaching of the Chinese.

Reoccupied with their ancestors and posterity, they accustom themselves to live in the past and the future, as much as in the present. Neither good nor evil fortune blinds them or brings them to despair. They are not always happy or powerful, neither are they always miserable or poor. Those who cannot go so far as to identify themselves with preceding or succeeding generations, retain from the knowledge of their family traditions a method of looking at things, which establishes a true equality between the strongest and weakest, and destroys even the idea of social caste and classes.

In every family there have been mandarins, viceroys, peasants and workmen; similar instances may occur in the future. Hence, instead of envy and conceit, hatred and annoyance, there arise that general kindness, that gentleness of relationship, that real brotherhood of which I have spoken.

Lastly, at a time when the necessity and difficulties

of judicial reform are occupying every mind in France, the Chinese system with its sure, rapid and economical self-jurisdiction cannot fail to have come under notice, and more than one reader will be unable to avoid regretting that the condition of our customs is such that we cannot even dream of borrowing from it.

PART II.

LABOUR.

SUPERNATURAL religions, whoever their founders, have always held one doctrine concerning labour, that it is a punishment. On this point all the ancient polytheism of the Greeks, the Indian, Jewish, Christian, and Mohammedan theisms are agreed, and in the civilisations derived from these sources, each individual endeavours to escape the common lot, but as it is work alone which provides the means of living, the stronger throw it upon the weak.

The priests who teach contempt of it, ally themselves naturally with soldiers to oppress it, and these two classes create others, in which they imprison without hope of escape those they condemn to labour—not only a shame, but a punishment. Thence arise the protests, revolts, and sanguinary suppressions which fill the history of Western humanity.

However, whether it be from a feeble glimmer of justice and good sense in the minds of the privileged classes, or whether they consider it advisable and

politic to distinguish from the mass of workers learned and literary men and artists, they have at all events created for them the category of the learned professions. But manual labour is none the less considered servile, and this distinction will never be effaced from either facts or thoughts. The least fatal result of this theory is to discourage workmen and peasants. All possess but one dream, to deliver themselves from labour, and to attain this end they recoil before no sacrifice, desiring at least, if they cannot succeed themselves, to carry away with them when dying the hope that their children may be more fortunate.

This wretched contempt of labour has had many other consequences, and it would not be difficult to show that it is from it that have arisen the wars, crimes, and violence of all kinds which are still a disgrace to European society.

All humanity has not, however, fallen into this error.

There is a people with whom, thanks to the absence of all supernatural religion, civilisation, founded on natural principles, has not only escaped the classes, and other causes of dissolution peculiar to the rest of the world, but has become so powerful that all religious, commercial, and military attacks made upon it by foreign civilisations, have met with nothing but constant resistance. I propose to deal rapidly with this latter point in the following pages, and shall then

pass on to the signification, the importance, and the part played by labour among the Chinese, its organisation, means, and method.

I.

It is commonly believed in Europe that Buddhism is the natural religion of China, and that it both has and does exercise over the institutions and spirit of the nation the same influences as other religions on the nations practising them. This is an error.

Buddhism is as a matter of fact the religion professed by the great majority of the Chinese people from the Emperor to the peasant, but only in the abstract, it has no influence on the national institutions. It is a creed of indifference and abstention which, with its tenets of individual salvation, or absorption into Nirvana, could never have inspired either the idea of absolute solidarity—such as I have shown to exist in the Chinese family, and as I shall presently show developing itself further and further—nor of the system of collective property, the foundation of the national constitution, nor of the patrimonial land, the base of the family organisation. It is otherwise as regards its power over the individual; and when the time comes to speak of the defects and exceptions of Chinese civilisation, after studying its normal working, I shall narrate the superstitions to which it has given rise.

I must, however, state once for all that its influence, even on individuals, is much less than is supposed.

I have inquired of Chinese with whom I have been on intimate terms whether they believed in the efficacy of their religious practices, receiving the following reply: 'Yours is a very embarrassing question. Sometimes we believe, often not; we laugh sometimes at those who go on pilgrimages, while we often go ourselves. It all depends.'

One day, shortly after my arrival in China, I came at the breakfast hour to an out-of-the-way village where there was no inn, and according to the usual custom in such cases, was taken to the temple.

The temple, I should observe, is from time to time used as a theatre, a club, a caravanserai, or a market. It contains no other furniture than the altar and the stools, on which rest the different forms of Buddha.

It seemed a hardship to be compelled to rest on the flagstones of the court, and I cast envious glances on these seats, but could not see how to obtain one. I thought of a jest. 'I have a great mind to invite their excellencies to breakfast with me,' I remarked to the crowd of peasants who surrounded me.

'These are not men—they do not eat,' replied one of them.

'Then,' replied I, 'if they do not eat, what do they do at table?' I can still hear the burst of laughter which followed.

In the twinkling of an eye, everyone turning to the work, the altar was freed and the figures laid upon the ground without ceremony.

After that, whenever I found myself similarly situated, I begged one of the bystanders to render me the same service, which was always done with great readiness.

On another occasion, during a severe drought, I came to a small town, almost all the inhabitants of which were in procession in the fields, and went to pay the usual visit to the sub-prefect. He was away, but arrived towards evening, walking slowly, like a man exhausted with fatigue. After apologies for his previous absence from home he observed, pointing to the people present at the visit, 'All these people are as stupid as geese; they thought they would form a procession to get rain, and force me to accompany them. It is stupid—they knew it quite well, and so do I—but one is obliged from time to time to give way to their fancies.' This was said good-naturedly, and everyone laughed.

'How do you intend to live?' added he; 'they have sworn not to eat meat while the drought lasts, and the butchers are not killing any animals. It is not just you should suffer from their folly; I will have an ox sent to you.'

He sent us an ox, some sheep, corn, fowls, and eggs, enough to keep us for a long time.

It will be seen that Buddhists are sufficiently free

in their belief, and know well enough when to keep to it or not.

The manner in which Buddhism is reported to have introduced itself into China is somewhat original.

> 'From Paris to Peru, from Rome to Japan,
> The most foolish thing methinks is man.'

Boileau is right in his views. From one end of the world to the other, from one age to another, in all latitudes, in a state of nature or civilisation, whether dolichocephale, orthocephale, or brachicephale, with woolly, smooth or crisp hair, man-white, black, yellow, red or violet, is a prey to the same superstitious wants. The great art of political men and philosophers is to claim these beliefs and make them inoffensive, and this was precisely the object which the philosophers and politicians of China set before them in the first century of our era. More than four hundred years had elapsed since the death of Confucius, and the false practices from which he had freed the national worship threatened to invade it again. The danger was to be avoided by unrivetting and canalising all these beliefs, and a grand quest was undertaken. Missions were sent to study the religions of all the world known to the Chinese. Buddhism was the religion brought back, with all its sects, especially that of Fo.

In some ways Buddhism was well adapted to ancient Chinese civilisation; it proscribes caste, teaches equality, and possesses a very pure morality. But it requires a

priesthood, which the Chinese had never possessed, and did not even comprehend. None could be found to undertake the office, and the Government was eventually compelled to take out of prison a certain number of individuals to whom they confided the spiritual and temporal care of the new temples.

As a matter of fact, the bonzes or Buddhist priests have never ceased to call themselves 'Condemned to death,' and always wear the cap and yellow dress of the galleys. The offices, celebrated in the Chinese language, and very similar to those of the Catholic Church so far as rite and costumes are concerned, attract no one.

Buddhism has always remained what its introducers desired, and its temples are nothing but drains into which any one goes without troubling himself about his neighbour, to clear his spirit of the impurities which may have touched it.

After the Buddhists the Taouists are the most numerous; it is said there are 100 millions of them. Taouism is not a religion; it possesses neither temples nor a priesthood. It is merely an interpretation, a deuterose of the ancient sacred books, the true doctrines of which have been lost or mingled with all kind of error.

Introduced by Lao-Tsee in his Tao-te-King, or Book of the Eternal Person, it soon collected a large number of disciples.

It might even have become general, but was soon

eclipsed by that proposed by Confucius fifty years later, which I shall soon explain.

Among many very beautiful and pure passages which have made it a classic and caused it to be added to the six ancient Kings, the Tao-te-King contains passages of so obscure a mysticism on the virtues and properties of numbers, on immortality, and other subjects, that it soon gave rise to beliefs as fantastic as those which its author wished to confute. Its actual votaries are persuaded that the human soul can in its successive revivals pass, according to its merits or faults, into the body of an animal or of a man, but that once arrived at a certain degree of perfection it will undergo no more transformations, and will remain always in the same body.

I have heard it said that a certain number of Taouists believe that this form of immortality can be obtained directly from this life without transformations, and that they are in search of a potion which will give them the means. These varying views sufficiently account for the want of success shown by Taouism. As is the case with Buddhism, Taouism has no effect on the social life of those who profess it. They observe the worship of ancestors, and associate generally with their neighbours in the national solemnities.

In a word, they are Taouists in the same way Christians are spiritualists. Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism are represented in China, but have no real success there.

Christianity was introduced for the first time by the Nestorians towards the eleventh century, and does not number more than 400,000 to 500,000 Catholic converts; the missionaries claim 600,000, but this figure appears exaggerated, and is contradicted by the missionaries of the different orders themselves.

Thus the Jesuits claim 100,000 converts in two of the provinces they evangelise—Kiang-Sou and Ngan-Hoei—but this figure is questioned by the lazarists and priests of foreign missions. The latter state they have 70,000 converts at Se-Chuen, but this is questioned by the Jesuits in their turn. We next come to Kouei-Cheou, which has had from 25,000 to 30,000 Christians during several months, but possesses now only from 6000 to 8000. The converts in fourteen other provinces, including Manchuria, may be calculated as amounting in each to from 4000 to 8000.

The quality of these converts is even more dubious than their quantity. 'Every one knows,' M. Delaplace, Bishop of Ning-Po, once said to me, 'how the Jesuits manufacture their Christians. They patch them up in a fortnight; they confess them once, but never see them again. Now, we devote two years to them.'

But, whether it be a fortnight or two years, the quality is the same. The gentleman who boasted of the length and the severity of the tests he imposed on his converts narrated to me with much indignation a scandal which had taken place in his flock.

The oldest, richest, and, up to then, the most faithful of his flock had just taken a second wife, during the lifetime of the first!

Despairing of a child by his legitimate wife, and approaching his sixtieth year, he had resolved on having one, and no consideration, neither the flames of hell nor the greater excommunication, could make him alter his determination.

Everlasting perdition! What could be worse than to die without posterity, and never to be born again to his own people on earth?

'May you never be reborn!' is the most terrible malediction to a Chinaman. Between the threats of the bishop and the promises of another world, which no one had seen, and the salvation and resurrection according to his ancient belief, he had chosen the latter, and preferred the life with which he was acquainted.

The missionaries themselves admit that if a body of Christians were left to themselves for two years without a visit, at the end of the period not a single Christian would be found.

Even the Chinese priests, recruited with difficulty as they are, cannot be left to themselves.

There was no trace of the Nestorians when the missionaries returned to China in the twelfth century, and of the latter there was but little when they returned in 1842, after thirty years of expulsion.

Protestantism, more recent in China than Catholi-

cism, hardly makes any converts, and I do not think their number surpasses a few thousands.

Mohammedanism dates from the conquest of Ghenghis-Khan, by whom it was introduced in the thirteenth century, or rather by whom it was imposed upon a certain number of Tartar-Mongol tribes, afterwards annexed to the Chinese Empire.

Mohammedanism made a further entry into China at a later date, and has converted a small part of the people living in the neighbourhood south-west of India. It has not, however, more than from 15 to 18 millions of followers in all, and although more strongly established than Christianity, in so far as it recruits its clergy on the spot, it makes no progress.

The check to armed proselytism which took place some years ago in the province of Yunnan gives no reason for a contrary belief.

Judaism, brought to China, according to some authorities, in the eleventh century before our era, and, according to others, in the first century A.D., has not spread beyond the posterity of those who brought it.

It does not possess more than a few million followers, of whom the largest number reside at Kai-Fong-Fou, in the province of Cheu-Si.

Their presence may be recognised by a special class of butchers, which the manner in which the animals required for their food are killed compels them to have; they can be distinguished in no other way from the rest of the population. This is worthy of remark; in

other countries the Jews have remained outside the ordinary civilisation, either from their own choice, or by the compulsion of the rest of the population. In all cases they have created for themselves a separate existence, which has caused them to be held in jealousy and hatred. In China, I repeat, it is impossible to distinguish them from the other inhabitants by their practice of any special kind of profession.

But whether it be a question of Jews, Christians, or Mohammedans, it is quite clear that all these religions are in a condition of powerlessness and inferiority in presence of Chinese civilisation. The least reproach alleged against them by the Chinese is that they destroy the homogeneity of the family, by investing strangers with an authority which it should derive only from itself, and by imposing laws already made impossible to understand, and which destroy in man the proper conscientious and intelligent research after the law. I have asked learned Chinese with whom I was well acquainted what they thought of us, receiving the reply, 'You do not cultivate your soul.'

And, as a matter of fact, others think of it for us.

II.

War and soldiers are far from possessing the same importance and prestige in China that they have in Europe.

The regular army consists of only 100,000 Tartars, but there are in some of the provinces a certain number of families descendant from the old military families, in which the State can recruit a militia of 400,000 men in time of war. All are subject to the Minister of War.

Officers have no precedence over civil functionaries in ordinary times, and I should hold that they do not seem to have an exaggerated idea of their dignity. In one of my earlier journeys the Chinese Government provided me with an escort of four men under the command of a colonel. I never saw a colonel less conceited with his grade and authority.

We ascended the Yang-Tse-Kiang, and the current was sometimes so strong that neither oars nor sails were of any use. The crew then got out, and half in the water, half on the vessel, pulled upon a cable fixed to it. The good man seemed to take pleasure in joining the boatmen, getting into the water, and helping them, and he even took with equanimity the light strokes with a cane which the boatswain laid about him to encourage the sailors.

As to the people, he said military service seemed to them so sad and dependent that the poorest considered it the last resource.

The Chinese army is therefore evidently an army of defence, and no one can fail to notice that numerically weak as it is, and little thought of in public opinion, it is not astonishing that the defensive force has often

proved its insufficiency against Tartars, Mongols, and Manchous, internal rebellions and European forces. I cannot enter upon this view of ideas without diverging from my subject.

My object in alluding to the Chinese army was to point out that in spite of her small forces and her enormous frontier of three or four thousand leagues, China has been able to protect herself, her laws and customs. The Manchous and Mongolians have frequently invaded China, and have captured the throne, but they have never annexed any Chinese territory, nor established any principalities or duchies, nor any new law, nor have they altered in any way the system of taxation, nor the status of property, nor the language.

On the contrary, they have been absorbed by the Chinese.

After the invasion, and the invaders had established themselves upon a throne which no one except the tenants of dynasties, which succumbed less to the force of the invaders than to the disaffection of the people, defended, China surrounded them and swallowed them up. She did more, she became in her turn the invader, and took their place. Manchuria, properly speaking, is nothing but a Chinese province, where the reigning dynasty has much labour to maintain, I will not say common custom, but even instruction in the Manchou language. It may be said that the Mongolians and the Manchous were barbarians, but the German

hordes which invaded Gaul in the first century and even later were also barbarians, and we are still suffering from the gross traces they have left upon our civilisation.

Furthermore, China has suffered invasion at other hands than those of Asiatics. Russia at different times has annexed vast stretches of territory on the north-west and north-east of the Chinese Empire.

On the north-west there are merely vast steppes inhabited only by tribes which are no more Chinese or Manchous than Russian or Siberian.

Russia has been able to keep these annexations, but she has been able to make no serious impression where China has been installed for any time, or on her penitential colonies.

There she meets a force stronger than her despotism and armies, a force composed not of men only, but of customs which she is unable to understand or to reconcile with her own.

As regards the French and English, the events which have recently taken place in Tonkin render it unnecessary for me to recall those of 1860.

All the world knows at what a price we bought the successes we obtained over the Chinese, in spite of our superior army and weapons. The resistance we met with, and which would have eventually destroyed us, did not come from their arms or their monetary resources, neither comparable to ours, but from a living wall, more solid and compact than all the

fortifications in the world, enlightened by a secular civilisation founded on justice and labour.

Foreign commerce will be our next subject.

III.

The first treaty of commerce was that concluded between Portugal and China 350 years ago, but for at least fifty years other European nations have been in constant intercourse with China and have been commercially represented there by their diplomats and merchants.

During the last twenty years European goods have freely penetrated the interior, and there is now not a corner of that vast empire where the products of Europe do not circulate freely, more freely than in some countries of Europe or America, since the customs dues, except for opium, which pays 33 per cent., do not amount to more than 5 to 8 per cent.

Nevertheless the commerce of Europe and America with China is much less extensive than the efforts which have been made and the favourable conditions resulting would lead one to suppose.

The statistics of the Chinese customs amount, it is true, to the respectable figure of 16,000,000 to 17,000,000 of francs, but this amount includes the interior trade transported from one part to another by European vessels.

Deducting the value of this, there remains a total

of 11,000,000 to 12,000,000 francs, united exports and imports, for the actual transactions between China and Europe, a sum nearly the same as in 1860. The treaties of commerce since concluded, and the opening of several new ports, have failed to increase the volume of trade, in spite of the ill-founded hopes of the merchants, who have been obliged to increase their expenses without adequate return.

Taking, therefore, 600 million francs as the amount each of the exports and imports, the question arises of what these imports are composed.

The most considerable is opium from India, which is brought into China by the only ports open to foreigners, to the amount of 280 or 300 million francs. I cite these figures; there is nothing to boast of in them. Then come cotton goods to the amount of 200 or 220 million francs; the remainder consist of a small quantity of English and Russian woollen goods, pig and bar iron, a few Paris and Vienna goods, and food products for the use of Europeans in China. Thus an importation of 275 to 290 millions of useful products is the result of the united efforts of the diplomatists and merchants of Europe for three hundred years, and the wars undertaken *per fas aut nefas* to second them. It was really hardly worth the trouble. What! you call yourselves Europe—a collection of nations each one of which believes itself more highly civilised than the other, and the least of which thinks it is far above the Chinese; you boast of possessing

the most powerful agents in the world—steam and electricity; you charter steamers at enormous cost, and if that be not sufficient, you send thousands of men and cannon to demonstrate your superiority—and all that in the end you may induce each Chinaman to buy from you sixty centimes' worth of so-called useful products! Is it not a little humiliating?

It has been said, and too often repeated, that the poor results obtained are to be attributed to the small wants and misery of the Chinese people.

That is not so; in no country are the people better off, and that is easily understood, because nowhere are the people more industrious and less weighed down with taxes. The reason lies simply in this question of taxation, which is so moderate, so just and well divided, while that of Europe is crushing. There is no octroi, excepting the small customs dues between province and province, no excise nor patents, no taxes on change of abode, no authority to seek for, nor formalities to undergo. Thus in spite of the common opinion of Europe, not only agriculture, but industry and commerce, have an enormous development in China. It is not so apparent, because there are no large manufactories with tall chimneys as with us, no large collections of workmen, no whistling of steam, nor sound of hammers; but, beware! every Chinaman has, perhaps, five or six trades at his fingers' ends, and can become at pleasure peasant, weaver, basket-maker, shoemaker, or blacksmith.

They can found cannon and shells, and statues sixty feet high, in sheds for which you would give hardly a few francs. It is against this system that you hurl your efforts, your commerce, your money, armies, engines, and the rest. We are too heavily laden with taxes and fetters of all kinds to be able to compete on even terms with the Chinese.

It is not difficult to guess what they will do when foreign importations cause them serious anxiety. It will be as with opium, which they did not produce till it was forced upon them by the English. They will erect looms, mills, and steam machinery of all kinds, as they have already done for silk and wool in two or three provinces—if needful, obtain European assistance, and dispense with European imports. It is to be hoped they will stop there, because the day that they take a fancy to engage in Western industry will mark a disastrous day for Europe. Free from taxes, with cheap and abundant labour, it will be impossible to compete with them.

The workers set free by the use of steam will flood the West in search of employment, and, if expelled by arms, they will alter their tactics and drown the markets of Europe with cheaper products than can be produced there. The danger is real, and not so far distant as some suppose. I gave notice of it twenty years ago,[1] and I am sure few persons will be able to

[1] *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, 1869 : Carte Agricole de la Chine.

refrain from smiling on reading this. Let them wait for twenty years!

It may, however, happen that the danger will be confined to a diminution of our imports, and that at the worst, we shall only be reduced to buy the silk and tea for money instead of products.

Unless the Chinese are absolutely compelled, and except in view of a revolution—in which they would have as much to lose as to gain—it is not probable that they will allow their industry to gain such an attraction in their eyes that they will seek outlets for it in foreign countries.

They are content with their condition as it stands, and I do not think it probable that they will be disposed to reverse the principles of their civilisation to adopt ours.

I used often to boast to them of the wonders worked by our industry, of our machinery, and the rapidity of our communications.

They were full of admiration, but when I asked why they would not adopt them, they used to answer, 'All that is very fine and perhaps excellent in your country, but it does not suit us, and would be a hateful innovation. We have numerous and magnificent canals which our ancestors have bequeathed us; they cost a great deal, but have long since been paid for. Transport by their means costs little, thanks to the winds and currents, and though the traffic on our rivers is considerable, the indispensable commodities are produced equally

throughout the country, and have scarcely ever any great distance to travel. Our agriculture, as varied as it is abundant, everywhere assures a subsistence to our people; where rice cannot be grown, we have corn, sorgho, maize, millet, &c., while there is always a sufficiency of less useful commodities, and in all cases their transport does not require rapid carriage.

'In a word, with us it may be said that, putting aside accidents, production and consumption are equally balanced. We suffer, it is true, from frequent floods; but do not you also? It arises, as you know, from the situation of our land, which is in many cases lower than the beds of the rivers. We have provided against them as much as possible by our canals, and by immense embankments, and we are making further provision daily by elevating the soil of our plains, so that floods are less frequent than before.

'How could railways deal better with such disasters than the reserve granaries we have established wherever possible? We do not hold the same views in regard to steam industry that you do, and are unwilling to manufacture more material than our land produces. As matters stand, our people is agricultural and attached to the land on which it thrives. Any industry which should seek raw material abroad, in order to manufacture it for export, would, by detaching the population from the soil, cease to be national. The people's interests would be where they could find markets and outlets, and any consequent complications which might arise

would affect us without our being able to remedy them. Furthermore, we should be obliged, in order to protect our commerce, to keep up diplomatic envoys, and if necessary to have recourse to force. All this would cost much, and would not repay us. Do you consider the commercial advantages you have obtained from us adequate to the wars and sacrifices they have cost you? We are well aware that this view brings much reproach upon us, and that we are accused of keeping ourselves within walls and cantonments, of not being friendly to other races, and of keeping ourselves outside the pale of humanity. But all this is unjust: we have gone further than you in regard to humanity. We have addressed ourselves to unknown generations, and called them to come among us. Our population is infinitely larger and denser than that of any other portion of the globe, and amounts to a third part of that humanity we are accused of neglecting. We are influenced by other considerations: your machinery is expensive, and one of your manufactories represents a value of 200,000 or 300,000 francs (£8000 or £12,000). No single individual in our country is rich enough to build one. A society alone could do it, and we do not like large societies—there are too many who are governed, and too few who govern; almost all are irresponsible. We do not like that any more in industry than in politics, but much prefer small or individual groups. After a large capital has been sunk in an industry, the owner is no longer able to suit his manufacture to his wants. It is

absolutely necessary that these sums should bring in interest, so that manufacture must be carried on at any cost, and outlets and markets sought for in foreign countries, which cannot always be kept if found. Large industries, such as exist in your country, ruin the individuality of workmen, they become machines and know only one trade; if the factory is stopped the hands are thrown out of work and die of hunger. In our country every man knows several trades; if one fails, he can fall back upon another. There is no cessation of work. Is your industry much superior or cheaper than ours? Make out a list of most necessary matters, and compare their prices.

'We have two principles, which, until we have been taught to give them up, will always compel us to oppose the adoption of your great methods of industry—respect for work, and for human life.

'No Chinese Government will ever dare to impose permanent taxes to build railways, without mentioning other sources of expense, unless each one of us recognises the absolute necessity of them. No Government or individual will dare to incur the terrible responsibility of the accidents and mortality caused, directly or indirectly, by the employment of your machines—from those which shorten the existence of the workers in your mines, to those which strike down your stokers and engineers.

'We have no Parliament like you,[1] and no one can

[1] Later on it will be shown how laws are made in China.

force upon us as progress, anything not approved of by every one, still less cause us a fraction of expense.

'That may be inconvenient in some ways, but there are corresponding advantages: it may be possible to obtain the consent of an assembly by surprise, it is not possible to obtain that of a nation which possesses a parliament in each family.'

The above is a faithful summary of what passed at numerous interviews with different Chinese.

IV.

Occasionally I went further, and spoke to them of our dreams, showing them in the dim futurity humanity relieved, thanks to machinery, from all the fatigue of labour, freed by science from all material care and trouble, and free to surrender itself to occupations more conformable to its tastes, intelligence and destiny.

They smiled, as if they either did not believe me or did not comprehend. 'With us,' they replied, 'labour is just, pleasant and easy; our dreams do not go beyond that point.'

One of them once added a reflection which struck me, and compelled me to reflect in my turn.

'How different our ideas are! You wish to suppress labour, while we consider its suppression would be the greatest of misfortunes, and the very idea of it a blasphemy.'

This sentence, with another which I heard with much surprise after my arrival,—'Mistrust religion'—were continually recurring to my mind, and indicated so total a transposition or transformation of religious idea and sentiment, that I could not help meditating upon it.

Here, I said to myself, is a people, a great people which burns what others adore, and adores what others burn, and yet it has existed for fifty or sixty centuries.

From that moment I began to form some comprehension of Chinese civilisation, and I confess that it was not until then that my observations took a serious shape.

There was for instance a ceremony, the meaning of which I had always failed to grasp; I allude to the 'Celebration of Husbandry,' performed yearly at the vernal equinox by the Emperor and the grand functionaries throughout the provinces. On that day the Emperor and those who represent him outside the capital, themselves holding the handles of the plough, open the ground, and shed upon it the seeds of the five species of cereals which grow in the different regions of China. I had always heard that the object of the ceremony was the honour of agriculture, and though it seemed to me it might also possess a higher meaning from the symbolic signification of the grain I had seen employed, I was content with the explanation for want of a better one. It was no longer sufficient for me. I made continual inquiries, and the answers I received

led me to further researches, which eventually discovered to me the principles and the philosophy of Chinese civilisation. These principles are contained in a work called Chi-Pen-Ti-Kang, an abridged encyclopedia, in ten volumes, published in 1747, of which a former Jesuit speaks as follows: 'The missionaries look upon it as very dangerous, and much opposed to the teaching of the Gospel, as it confines itself to deism and natural religion, and does not raise its teaching above the level of reason and conscience, which it renders too content to allow them to feel easily the necessity of revelation.' This statement it seems renders a translation much to be desired, but the writer explains why none has been made. The work is not to be found at the library in the Rue Richelieu, whither, nevertheless, the ancient Jesuits, to do them justice, sent many volumes. A knowledge of the Chinese language is no longer now, any more than then, a monopoly of the missionaries; there are now very many good French, English, German and Russian *sinologues*. But it is not sufficient always to know a language and to know it well, and we may grant there are many who may be said so to know Chinese as to be able to interpret all its productions. A particular kind of taste is required, with a complete absence of vanity, and a certain simplicity of heart and mind. On this account perhaps the Chi-Pen-Ti-Kang has never been translated into any European language, and only one European, to my knowledge, has spoken of it, Father

Amyot, whom I have just quoted. Another who has read it, but does not say so, and has found in it something quite different to what really exists, is Father de Rémare; only, less independent than his colleague, he read it in the quality of a Catholic desirous of bringing the words of so great an authority into conformity with his religious convictions.

It is from the Chi-Pen-Ti-Kang, as well as from the Tao-te-King, that he has drawn the matter of a Latin memoir, sent to France towards the middle of the thirteenth century, entitled *Vestiges of the Principal Christian Dogmas after the Ancient Chinese Books.*

It is sufficient to glance through the memoir to see the pains which it has cost. Sometimes, for example, he sees the description of the Person of Jesus Christ in a character which to every Christian signifies man unique, universal man, or humanity as a whole. Sometimes he is reduced to argue with Confucius and his disciples, of whose doctrine the Chi-Pen-Ti-Kang is a complete *résumé*, and to prefer to them the more mystic teaching of Lao Tsee.

In spite of all, however, he allows himself to be drawn away by the evidence of the natural meaning of the words, and thus brings upon himself the censure of his editors.

I have not read the Chi-Pen-Ti-Kang, for I have unfortunately no knowledge of literary Chinese, but I have had the books which interested me read and

explained to me at different times by different persons —as good a method of arriving at a comprehension of them as perhaps any other.

Chinese civilisation is not a dead civilisation like those of Egypt and Assyria, and one is not reduced to styles and palimpsests in order to reconstitute it.

Nothing really is required but the use of eyes and ears, and I may add that it is much easier of comprehension than any other living civilisation. None offers fewer contradictions and more unity.

Each and every part combines with the rest to form one harmonious whole. An examination of its laws, customs, philosophy and agriculture, its arts and industry, has but one result, the absolute unity of humanity and the family, in which this principle is most clearly established.

I myself arrived at my knowledge of it by means of agriculture, and it will shortly be seen how well chance served me. A complete or even an extended exposition of the doctrines of the Chinese Encyclopedia will certainly not be expected of me—it is a task of which only a savant would be capable. I will confine myself to stating, in as few words as possible, exactly what I myself sought to learn; an explanation of facts I had always before me.

The reader will be grateful for my moderation, and he will possess all the information necessary to check my conclusions, and all that I had to enable me to form them.

The teaching set forth in the Chi-Pen-Ti-Kang has

this peculiarity, which is perhaps typical of the Chinese race, that it possessed as a whole no liberator, founder, nor was it the subject of any revelation. It is said that it was contained in its entirety in the 'Kings.'[1]

The fact is that a certain number of philosophers or politicians exercised their minds on these books, which are written in characters of hieroglyphic conciseness and obscure signs. They proposed interpretations which were adopted or rejected by public opinion, while some took advantage of the respect in which these sacred books were held to ventilate ideas which were really the product of their own brains.

However it was brought about, it was wanting in unity, and many errors were mingled with it.

Confucius undertook to eliminate all that was dangerous and useless from this medley.

He substituted for the interpretations which seemed to him false, others which his genius dictated to him, and with those which he retained he formed the harmonious, simple and practical system accepted not only by the Chinese but by many other peoples of the Far East for more than 2200 years.

It is this system to which Europeans, unacquainted

[1] There are six books. The first and oldest is the Y-King, a book of transformations; the title is worth notice. The second, or Chou-King, is historical, and may in some parts be compared with the Bible. The third, the Chi-King, a book of verses; the fourth, Li-King, a book of rites; the fifth, the Yo-King, a book of music or harmony; and the sixth, or Chau-Siou, a book of spring and autumn. The fourth and fifth books have been lost.

with it, have given the name of the religion of Confucius.

When speaking of the universe it is important, according to the Chinese, not to forget that the universe includes things visible and invisible, apparent and real, and that they cannot be separated even in thought.

It is impossible, for instance, to separate from matter the force of gravity, nor is it possible to separate the idea of anything from the form appertaining to it. The form may not be apparent, but it nevertheless exists; these are bodies spiritual.[1]

The matter which makes them apparent to our eyes merely fills the spiritual bodies, like water the form of the vase which it fills.[2] In this sense neither the body nor the spirit are separable from each other; nor, speaking more generally, are the universe and the reason of the universe separable. To misunderstand this truth would be the gravest of all faults.

This granted, the entire universe, with its worlds, forms a whole the parts of which hold the same relation to one another as the molecules of a sphere. All are subject to the same laws, but the universe as a whole possesses other laws and reasons than those of the parts it contains. Each of these parts obeys a law or reason which is up to a certain point exterior to it; and as we cannot conceive the forces, movement and extent of the universe, we say that it is infinite. It contains all law, but is itself governed by its reason,

[1] Lao-tsse. [2] Li-tsse, 398 B.C.

which is infinite. The question arises whether this reason possesses intelligence. Heaven and earth are great, but they have colour, shape, number, and quantity. Man is the possessor of something which has neither colour, form, number, or quantity, and this something is intelligence. Then, since the universe is animated only by man, it must be at least animated by the intelligence of man. But this intelligence, being limited, can only be that of the universe. From whence it appears that the universe possesses an intelligence and is infinite.[1]

The Chinese have no name for this intelligent and infinite law and reason; it is merely distinguished by metaphors. In ordinary language it is known as Heaven or the Supreme Lord, Chang-ti. In philosophical language it is called the 'Infinite,' Tai-ki; or in short, power, force, or energy, without shape, number, or quantity. It does not exist without the earth or the matter in which it is manifest, and from thence comes another power, that of the earth—passive energy.

The first, as it only exists in a potential state, cannot manifest itself without passing into an active, and it then constitutes a third power or energy, the hypostase of the first—energy in an active condition. It is man, but not the visible, incomplete and imperfect man with which we are acquainted. There is a man, in whom both the sexes and all the other men exist, and

[1] Kwaug-Yun-tse, 604 B.C.

who is, as it were, the body spiritual of all humanity, the one-man, man of humanity—Y-gen—whom the Chinese also call the father-mother, Fou-mou, man-hidden, invisible, heavenly, perfect—so pure from all defect inherent to all material form—or, in short, the saint. In ordinary language he is also known as Tien-Hoang, the Lord of Heaven.

These three energies being inseparable, make one, which calls itself Tai-Y, the great unity. They have been co-existing from all eternity.

The saint is intermediary between Heaven and earth, who unite in him. He is the word, and it is through him that Heaven, or Tai-ki, speaks and acts.[1]

The saint possesses the power of moving, transforming and perfecting.[2]

There is no other creation; every man is made in his image, with a spiritual body like him, exists only for him and through him. In him are all men and all creatures inseparably united through him to heaven and earth.

The law for every man on earth is to imitate him, which is done by conforming to unity, in never violating it by any act, in approaching it nearer and nearer in spite of the condition of feebleness and imperfection which results from the union of our spirit with matter. He is imitated by transforming and continually perfecting oneself and everything, and by

[1] Man, Goethe said, is the first communion of nature with God.

[2] Y-King Tsee-Hou-tsee.

directing oneself at the same time to the realisation of this unity—that is, by labour.

This law contains all other, and is inherent to every man, while whoever understands and obeys it will be rewarded, and indeed is *ipso facto* rewarded. There is no crime or misfortune greater than to infringe it.

Labour, which is a condition of nature and of the essence of man, is always a necessity, but when its end is not understood it becomes a punishment. Unity, such as has been defined—that is, unity of men among themselves and of the earth with humanity and all creation—is an absolute fact; and therefore death, with the consequences taught by other religions—as the everlasting separation of body and soul, and the division of men into elect and condemned; the supposition of a world beyond the universe; a place of recompense or punishment—are ideas without meaning for the Chinese.

There are no worlds beyond those contained in the universe, and there is no life for humanity except life on earth, at all events so long as the earth exists; and it is in a succession of rebirths upon earth that man will find, according to the condition to which he has brought his soul in his previous existence, his punishment or recompense.

If he has cultivated and perfected it he will be reborn with all faculties, even physical and bodily, necessary to ensure him happiness; while, if he has not developed it, he will not be able to understand the

qualifications needful for happiness, and everything will be against him. These transformations and rebirths will be renewed and perpetuated for each of us, until the part of the universe which we inhabit is itself transformed, when the earth will be dissolved, and the particles composing it will again enter chaos until they form or join other worlds, and the human soul, leaving its body, will pass into another sphere. There it will reunite with matter and will live under the same laws, but under more favourable conditions, having regard, in the first place, to the degree of unity it may have attained, and in the second to the modifications to which matter may be subject in the new spheres—that is to say, that there will be a more perfect harmony between men, their senses and organs will be more perfect, life will be more effective, pleasant, and happier.

The above forms a very short *résumé* of the philosophical and moral system known in Europe as that of Confucius, and the reader can judge for himself how far it deserves the praise given it by Father Amyot, and if it does not in fact arise from the doctrine of reason.

What is absolutely certain is that in China these doctrines have formed the laws and customs under which, for upwards of 2000 years, a people, now numbering more than 500,000,000 inhabitants, have lived and died.

There is no other religion of which the same can be

said, for there is none which gives to the problems which vex man the same clear and precise solutions, at the same time so much in accordance with his inmost hopes.

It is not correct to say, with Benjamin Constant, 'that on this earth the different generations follow each other as birds of passage, isolated from each other, and driven by chance; that they appear, suffer, and die, with no link between them; that no voice is carried from the extinct to living races, while that of the living will soon be lost in eternal silence.'

No; the generations are conjoint to one another absolutely and for ever in space and time; they are *one*, and live, for if they died they would cease to be one, and to be solid. Death is but a transformation.

'Do not dream of a life beyond this, for you will find no other, nor of a heaven beyond the universe, for beyond the infinite universe there is nothing. Earth is heaven, and paradise is on earth; it is for you to realise it. Cultivate your mind, honour your ancestors, respect your traditions, let the past and the future be both a living present to your mind. Identify yourself with one and the other through humanity. Never forget that you are one with the earth, with the universe, and take care no act of yours offends against this unity. Endeavour, on the contrary, in all ways to draw the bonds tighter. To labour is to transform and to create. Transform all that surrounds you—create the soil, the animal, and the plant. Create yourselves.'

Such, in brief, is the catechism or religious code of China, and it has so far entered the hearts and practice of the population that the civil code is not much longer. There is, however, a solemnity which resumes its teaching even more briefly—that is, the celebration of labour. On the day of the vernal equinox, the Emperor is conducted to the Temple of Earth.

There, standing in front of the altar, surrounded by the great dignitaries of the empire and of the people, he offers to Heaven the five kinds of grain which are grown, according to the climate, from the north to the south of the land, and he implores a blessing upon them. Thence he proceeds to a field within the temple inclosure, where he traces five furrows with a silver plough, in which he sows the five consecrated kinds of grain, and the rite is accomplished. The offering of the grain sets forth the communion of man, Heaven, and earth. The grain itself is the symbol of regeneration, or of unity of time; the five kinds of grain are the symbols of unity in space; and the plough the symbol of labour, without which the regeneration could not be effected, and unity would be destroyed.

Here we have a synthesis of the principles of Chinese civilisation, and this solemnity of labour is regarded as the greatest and most important. There are three others, one of which recalls human solidarity; it is the Celebration of the Dead, which takes place later on, and is officially celebrated as well as observed by private persons.

The people on that day do not confine themselves to visits to family graves; they go to the common cemeteries, and celebrate the funeral ceremonies on the graves of those whose families have not removed their ashes, and even on those of felons.

There are two other solemnities at the solstices of summer and winter, the object of the one being to entreat an abundant harvest, and of the other to thank Heaven for its gifts. In former times these feasts were celebrated in the open country; they now take place in the temples, which are the Temple of Heaven, the Temple of Earth, the Temple of Light, and the Temple of Thunder.

Of the last it may be of interest to remark that the character which in the Y-King signifies thunder, signifies at the same time to move, change, or begin. It is unnecessary to add that these temples have no priest, and that when the Emperor goes there at fixed periods it is not as a minister of Heaven, but as the representative of Chinese humanity.

The title he usually bears shows this also with sufficient clearness; he is called Father-Mother, Fou-Mou, which the reader will doubtless remember is one of the denominations given to the Man of Humanity, or Universal Man.

I could say much regarding the symbolic signification of the colours of the prism which borders the dress of the Emperor on certain occasions; of the white, which indicates mourning; of the dragon Lung, which

represents spiritual humanity; but although not foreign to the subject, it would carry me too far.

I prefer to invite attention to certain facts, which show even more clearly than the systems of taxation, property, and other public institutions, how far the Confucian philosophy has penetrated the mind and customs of the people. The reader will not have forgotten the custom observed at funerals, of causing the corpse to be represented by the youngest child in the family, in whom the reincarnation of the remains is regarded as already taking place, thus re-establishing unity among the members of the family, suspended for an instant by death. Another custom, supplementary to this, exists: the early betrothal of infants from their birth, intended not only to prepare the future spouses for a more intimate union of feeling and thought, but above all to re-establish, as soon as possible, the unity of the sexes, or unity in space, as in the Man of Humanity, or the Androgynous Man.

The idea of unity thus so deeply engraved on the heart of man is found also on the walls both of public buildings and private dwellings, where, on pendants decorating the ceiling, such inscriptions as these are frequently to be seen:—

'Let no man call himself happy while another is miserable.'

'If one man lives in laziness, another will die of hunger.'

But it is in the taste and ideas bestowed upon the

people in regard to labour, the tendency it has produced in all matters concerning it, that the profound effects of the Confucian philosophy are to be seen, that its genius is most clearly set forth, and its best and most beautiful fruits borne.

There, is the apotheosis of its triumph.

V.

Existing without hope of any world beyond this, or of any happiness unattainable here—labour the only means open to them of realising that happiness,—it will be readily understood that to approach it under the most favourable conditions is to Chinamen the first consideration of all.

Man is from the nature of his being a creator and a worker, but it is not right that the inner tendencies of his mind should be counteracted in his interest or his dignity.

There exists no surer method of ennobling labour than to show its intimate agreement with natural laws, but the working of these laws must not be set at nought by others civil and political. On this point the Chinese have been most careful, and hence arise the moderation of the taxes; the property system which grants the labourer the value of all he has created; the right of the State to resume possession of vacant lands; the freedom and honour accorded to labour, and the

labourer; the absence of persons independent of work, of the luxurious classes, and equally of slaves or serfs. Labour is the common lot and privilege of all, and it is labour to the same end, the continual reclamation of land, and its products for good, or, as they say themselves, to the more constant and intimate communion between Heaven and earth.[1]

The professions termed liberal in Europe are on the same level as handicrafts.[2] A working mason, peasant, or carpenter is held in as high estimation as a doctor, and is not less well paid.

The doctor receives 25 centimes (2½*d.*), sometimes less, at the most 50 centimes (5*d.*), for a visit; an engraver or painter earns by the day from 50 to 60 centimes (5*d.* to 6*d.*); a worker in art 50 centimes (5*d.*), without food. In the country they earn only from 25 to 30 centimes (2½*d.* to 3*d.*), but receive food, while the ordinary field hand earns 15 to 20 centimes (1½*d.* to 2*d.*) a day, with his food. An additional halfpenny is paid for transplanting, and an additional penny for threshing rice. It is clear that the equality of professions is not simply a theory in China—not, perhaps, a very encouraging circumstance for those desirous of making out a pretext of relieving themselves of

[1] Y-King. The communion is typified by two triangles, one white, the other black, intersecting each other at one of their angles.

[2] Excepting in three instances, which, as I shall show later, have no relation to the nature of the profession.

manual labour, but no cause of complaint to genuine artists.

In all cases, without attempting here to touch an æsthetic question, in no way connected with money, the system is not without its good effects in the public interest. Thus, players not being more highly paid than other workers, the theatre is a pleasure available to all classes. A troop of thirty players, provided with costumes, mostly very fine, will play for forty-eight hours as many dramas, vaudevilles, and comedies as may be desired for a sum of 150 francs (£6), though it must be confessed that the stage and scenery are generally left to the imagination. The ordinary seats, however, do not cost more than 2 to 3 centimes (less than ½*d.*), while the best can be had for 15 to 20 centimes (1½*d.* to 2*d.*). As the country is thickly peopled, even the remotest hamlets are frequently visited by wandering troupes, so that even the poorest may feast their eyes several times a month on the grand historical events of their country, or—for the truth must be told—enjoy distraction from their labours in the coarsest form of comedy.

It was stated above that all professions are equal in China; there is, however, one which is above all the others—that of letters and teaching. Later on, when dealing with the State, I shall speak of the honours and privileges accorded to it. I confine myself now to pointing to the place it occupies in popular estimation; in no country, perhaps, are science and letters more

highly honoured than in China. Old age is the only qualification placed on a level with them. If among the importunate crowds which surrounded me, I perceived an old man, I used to ask him to approach, and going before him, used to conduct him to the place of honour. In an instant all gibes and grumbling ceased, and the most complete silence reigned. I had drawn between the crowd and myself that common bond, the absence of which is frequently the cause of the difficulties a stranger meets with, and in this instance the common bond was the respect due to old age. I was no longer a foreigner, but a guest. I behaved similarly in regard to the literati, never failing, on my arrival in a place, to make inquiries concerning those of highest reputation, and, having done so, to lose no time in paying them my respects. By showing such marks of deference to established feeling, I was soon able to transform indifference and mistrust into friendliness and confidence.

A tutor invariably retains the right of reprimand over a former pupil, even although the latter may have arrived at very high rank, and it frequently occurs that the people, having some ground of complaint against an official, send for his former tutor, even from a great distance, to be their intercessor with the prefect, governor, or viceroy, while his mediation always receives respectful attention.

Unfortunately, if the literary career be the only one held in such extraordinary esteem, it is also the only

one which produces what are known among us as the unclassed.

The examinations, or, rather, competitions, are very severe, and there are but few who are successful, while the number of places the Government has at its disposal is correspondingly limited, so that, if without sufficient resources to enable them to wait and continue their education, the unsuccessful candidates are obliged to seek some method of earning a livelihood. Some become tutors, public writers, professors, &c.; others turn to commerce and agriculture, and contribute not a little to elevate the intellectual standard of the people; but many unfortunately prefer to await a chance, looking out for someone's disgrace and dismissal—intriguing like all the unclassed, and becoming perfect pests. I must not, however, be construed as stating that public office is the only aim of those who embrace a literary career; that is true only up to a certain point. Many literati desire to arrive at office because it is the last and highest consecration of talent, and reflects honour upon the family; but many more officials than would be supposed resign after two or three years' service, and retire into private life. I knew a prefect who gave up his administrative career at thirty-four or thirty-five years of age and became a schoolmaster. Such a case is not uncommon, and it may be remarked that public employment in China is very far from being a sinecure, and many become weary of it; while, besides voluntary and final

resignations, there are those temporary retirements following upon the death of a father or mother, and lasting for three years, the whole period of mourning. The reader can now form for himself a general idea of the ordinary conditions of work from a social and economic point of view. He knows that there exists no prejudice, no natural disgrace to prejudice what are known to economists as the laws of supply and demand, and thus produce more or less members than the different professions have room for. He knows that taxation and the system of property equally respect everywhere the rights of labour, and that in that there is nothing, not even the pleasures which are also the privileges of dwellers in cities, to attract the peasant from the soil on which he is born. The deduction is easy.

The doctrine of the unity of the earth and humanity is a reality in each family, and for each individual. Property in land inviolable and sacred, and a guarantee of liberty, is to man a veritable savings-bank. He is attached to the soil he has made, and he never leaves it, except when necessary to transform its products. This is the limit of industrial labour. To employ the resources of the soil otherwise than in re-enriching it, and to create a condition of affairs which would result in drawing its elements from foreign parts in order to return them thither for sale, would be to a Chinaman like building castles in the air, and, besides being a folly, an act of injustice and danger.

No doubt many will smile at this as political

economy, but the net result has been to make Chinese soil the richest and most fertile in the world. Assuming that the whole territory produces only rice, corn, maizé, sorgho and millet, its value cannot be less than 1100 or 1200 milliards of francs [1] (£44,000,000,000 or £48,000,000,000), and would certainly reach 1800 milliards (£72,000,000,000) if to it be added the additional value of lands cultivated with mulberries, tea, sugar-cane, oranges, hemp, oil, wax, &c.

It amounts, as will be seen, in proportion to three times the value of the soil of France, and once-and-a-half more for each inhabitant.

It cannot be alleged that China and the Chinese are poor, and it should be noted that the value I have given in French money, for want of another standard of comparison, is much less than the real value, for far more is obtainable for a franc in China than in France. The value besides is real, and represents the amount of savings and labour accumulated in the soil, the sum of advances always employed, and always lent to the existing generation by its predecessors. And it is a wealth which is corrupted by neither moth nor rust, nor can be carried away by a thief, nor affected by conversion, and is continually increasing. Where is a ledger like the soil to be found?—and the Chinese possess no other. I do not remember what thinker wrote that the virtue of a people may be estimated by the value of

[1] *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie.*

its territory, but if this be true the reader can draw his own conclusions.

But he may say to me, 'You have just said that more can be obtained for a franc than in France; money, therefore, is more scarce; where then are the savings of which you spoke.' The savings are in the soil, while circulating capital is certainly more scarce than in France. There is nothing surprising in this, since the owners of capital make use of it directly, and there are no persons living upon their means as with us. Loanable capital is in such demand that interest amounts often to thirty per cent., but I should add that this amount is payable for only three years, and that after that period the principal only remains due. This statement appears directly contradictory to what I have already said concerning the case with which credit is obtained; but it is true, and I shall shortly show how it works. I propose now to return to the subject of labour.

I have shown that in China industry existed only in agriculture, but as the soil is more fertile than in any other country, and often returns four or five crops per annum, it has there experienced a most extraordinary development. Frequently, there is no division of labour: the peasant himself prepares his sugar-cane, his hemp; manufactures his oil; winds and divides his silk cocoons with the assistance of his family. If the produce is insufficient, as frequently occurs, it is added to

that of the neighbours, and a division is made pending a favourable opportunity of sale.

Peasants in poor circumstances are often obliged to sell their produce raw. Opportunities for the sale of all kinds of produce are afforded by large markets, which are held in different places eight or ten times a month in a district of ten square leagues, and are attended by merchants and manufacturers. The latter, in spite of their occupation, by no means separate themselves entirely from the soil; if they live in towns, at all events they come from villages, where they still belong to the family community, or, should the community have been dissolved, they reserve or purchase a plot of ground with the intention of eventually retiring to it and making of it the patrimonial land—the dream of every Chinaman.

I have already stated that there is no great industry in China; capital there is much divided, and only concentrated for commercial operations at short date. There are houses which possess a working capital of from 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 francs (£400,000 to £180,000); these are always companies. The most powerful shipping company in China is a Chinese company, and possesses an estimated capital of from 25,000,000 to 30,000,000 francs (£1,000,000 to £1,200,000). One man, the Rothschild of China, is said to possess a fortune of 100,000,000 francs (£4,000,000), invested in all kinds of agricultural, industrial, financial, and commercial enterprises, but this is a very exceptional case.

Industries most requiring capital, such as forges and iron foundries, are worked in China with funds varying from 50,000 to 100,000 francs (£2000 to £4000), generally supplied by three or four partners.

I am acquainted with a foundry at Se-Chuen which, with a capital of 50,000 or 60,000 francs (£2000 or £2400), produces from 40,000 to 60,000 kilogrammes (393 to 590 tons) of smelting per day. If the day's smelting amounts to 40,000 kilogrammes (393 tons), a red flag is erected on one of the chimneys; if to 45,000, two ounces of meat are added to the pay of the workmen; if to 50,000, four ounces; if to 60,000, four ounces and two glasses of wine. The foundry employs twelve workmen who have a right to these additions, and employs 300 others in mining and transporting the mineral.

Since I have given so many details about this foundry, I will add that it pays a tax of from 500 to 600 francs (£20 to £30) annually, not on the manufacture, but as royalty on the raw material, the mines being the property of the State. This is a specimen of industry on a large scale; the most usual form is that of a family assisted by one, two, three, six or eight workmen, with one or two apprentices. The strange workmen do not reside with the family; if, as is most usual, belonging to the place, they return to their homes at night; if not, they make use of the village inn. It is a common custom, in certain industries, for the masters to associate their principal workmen with themselves, by giving them a

share of the profits; while another form of labour in much favour with the Chinese, both masters and hands, is piece-work. Fixed wages are by no means usual, either in industrial or agricultural work in China, industrial property being largely modelled on the agricultural system, and there being many more individuals and families working for their own benefit than salaried workmen.

I have above indicated the ordinary salaries, and I will now give the prices of common necessaries.

A bowl of cooked rice 3 centimes ($\frac{1}{3}d.$)—two or three are required for a meal; beef per pound 10 to 15 centimes (1*d.* to $1\frac{1}{2}d.$), pork 30 centimes (3*d.*), fish 10 and 15 centimes (1*d.* and $1\frac{1}{2}d.$); a fowl 35 to 50 centimes ($3\frac{1}{2}d.$ to 5*d.*), a duck 40 centimes (4*d.*), tea 1 centime a bowl, rice or sorgho wine 10 centimes (1*d.*); tobacco 25 to 75 centimes ($2\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $7\frac{1}{2}d.$); a bed at an inn 4 centimes; a pair of velvet shoes 2 francs 50 centimes or 3 francs (2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*); a cap of double felt 50 centimes to 1 franc (5*d.* to 10*d.*); a summer coat 2 francs to 2 francs 50 centimes (1*s.* 8*d.* to 2*s.*); a wadded dress for winter 7 to 10 francs (5*s.* 10*d.* to 8*s.* 4*d.*); leggings 2 francs 50 centimes to 3 francs (2*s.* 0*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*); a collar 50 centimes to 1 franc (5*d.* to 10*d.*); a double sheepskin overcoat 8 to 10 francs (6*s.* 8*d.* to 8*s.* 4*d.*); a straw hat 5 to 10 centimes ($\frac{1}{2}d.$ to 1*d.*); a pair of cord shoes 8 to 15 centimes.[1]

The different professions form themselves into cor-

[1] These prices were all collected in the centre provinces.

porations, masters of the one part, and workmen of the other, where all disputes are decided by arbitration, and whence all can, in case of need, obtain assistance from the subscribed funds. A large number of persons, skilled in various trades, become members of different corporations; there is no difficulty in membership, which is necessary to avoid possible deprivation of work. Accidents necessitating application for help, are less numerous than with us, for several reasons; the houses are as a rule of one floor only, steam machinery is not employed, and mines are never carried to any great depth, while the Chinaman works leisurely, and thus avoids many accidents.

Every corporation possesses a patron as with us, and the pagoda containing his statue is the subject of frequent meetings and pilgrimages, which are observed as holidays by all concerned. The apprentice is there inducted companion, and the companion master, and there also their works are exposed to public view.

I omitted to state that the usual duration of apprenticeship is three years. There is, it will be seen, much analogy if not perfect identity between these customs and those of the corporations of former times with us. There is one especially, which in its exterior manifestations brings to memory those of our fishermen and sailors.

At Se-Chuen and in Ché-Kiang they have chosen as patroness a young girl who six or seven centuries ago

dreamed that her father and brothers, occupied in fishing at sea, were in danger of perishing in a storm. She narrated her dream to her mother, who had awakened her. They both aroused the neighbours and went to the help of the fishermen, whom they found in great danger, but whom they succeeded in saving. The chapel of Notre-Dame-de la-Garde is not more decorated with thank-offerings than the pagoda in which they have placed the image of this young girl.

The women do little work outside the family; if obliged to leave it, they enter others as domestic servants, and are treated as relations. In Shanghai, nevertheless, a large number are employed in the silk-works which were established there about twenty years ago by Europeans, but they are held in bad odour by the remainder of the population. In the country I know only three or four provinces where women are employed on salary, and there they work by threes and fours in small shops separated from the men. Much has been said in Europe of the deformation of the Chinese foot, and many have professed to see in it a sign of the subjection of the women. I have often questioned Chinese on this point, but have never been successful in obtaining a serious explanation. Some answered me with one of those jests which badly bred men of all countries indulge in about women, while others knew no more than we ourselves do of the deformation of the head among the inhabitants of Toulouse, or of the bust among those European women who indulge themselves

in the use of the corset. Some say that the fashion was first started seven or eight centuries ago, in imitation of an empress afflicted with a deformed foot. But however it may be, there are very few women who have adopted it in the country, and it has been prohibited nearly 300 years among the women admitted to the presence of the Empress.

But it is often as difficult in China as elsewhere to dispose of a custom, however evil in its effects, as it is to bring about the acceptation of another, a hundred times more conformable to the rules of hygiene and good sense.

It is not difficult in China for a member to pass from the freedom to the mastership of a company, thanks to the remarkable habits of order, economy and trust of its people, and this leads me to say a few words concerning the institutions which stimulate and favour the acquirement of these habits.

It may, perhaps, be known that the only token of value current in China is a small piece of round bronze pierced with a hole in the middle, called sapèque (cash) by Europeans. It weighs about 7 grammes, and 1000 sapèques on a string are worth about 5 fr. (4*s*. 2*d*.).

The tael is merely the indication of a weight, equivalent to one Chinese ounce, or 37·796 grammes of silver, and after being verified for weight, it requires verification for its distinctive title.

The sapèque or chien is stated to have been invented 2600 years before our era; it is, as has been shown, a

heavy and clumsy coin, but it was the origin of fiduciary money.

The institution of banking dates from the same period, as it will be readily understood that the heavy weight of the coin necessarily led people to think how its transport could be avoided. It will readily be supposed also that the light construction of Chinese houses, and the fires to which their wooden materials expose them, induced persons a long time ago to unite their savings in special banks under the care of a clerk, whose duty it was to take note of all payments made, and to cash drafts when required. Here we have a banking system. The existing banks in no way differ from their primitive predecessors. They are above all banks of deposit and withdrawal, and if they have made but little progress in their method of operations, they have on the other hand become so popular that there is no merchant or farmer, or even established workman, who has not an account current with some banking house. Payments are made there by means of bankers, equally ready to serve the merchant in his transactions of from 500,000 to 600,000 francs, and the small artisan bringing his week's or day's savings. As a large deposit is the principal element in the success of the banks, they solicit it in every possible way; they do not confine themselves to granting interest on the daily balance of their clients, they further undertake to grant them advances when required. Custom, in fact, ordains that a client may obtain at the rate of the day, on his note

of hand and personal guarantee, a sum double that standing to his credit. Every depositor has the right to withdraw his deposit at will without previous notice, and without suffering loss of interest up to the date of withdrawal; and lastly, he may claim the guarantee of his banker in case of transactions with persons to whom he is unknown, or belonging to another province. All these conveniences must, of course, be paid for, but it is none the less true that they are of considerable value in the conduct of business which would be otherwise impossible. Thus, however little employment a workman may have had, he may find himself at twenty-two years of age master of a capital of 300 or 400 francs (£12 or £16), including interest, and has the right to demand a corresponding advance from his banker. Much may be done in China with 700 or 800 francs (£28 or £32). He can also, if he is the possessor of a piece of land, mortgage it by handing over to the lender his title deed with an endorsement of the sum borrowed.

There are also pawnbroking establishments which will make advances to him upon his wages, at 7 or 8 per cent., which, though private enterprises, free from any control, are perfectly trustworthy. Let us suppose that the young man possesses no resources but his own courage and a friend. He looks for this friend and tells him what he requires; the latter finds a third and fourth, until ten are collected. The young man, who makes the eleventh, invites them to a cup of tea,

tells them of his ideas and plans for the future, and if these meet with approval, the eleven become partners.

The society thus founded is not intended to pursue these projects in common. Generally speaking, large companies of shareholders are as rare as small societies of two to eight or ten individuals are common; the Chinese having a strong dislike to large societies, in which they say all initiative, responsibility, independence, and profit are lost. In the case in point it is precisely these qualities which are most necessary to the young man of whom we have spoken. All that is proposed is simply to place the necessary capital at his disposal, to be repaid by yearly instalments in a given time. But as this motive is too disinterested to induce persons, to whom the borrower is unknown, to assist him, the Chinese have devised different combinations, which, while assuring to each partner the reimbursement of his capital and interest, also secure to him, during a time agreed upon, the use of a sum of money equal to that first advanced. Each of the associates, therefore, engages to continue his loan during all the time necessary to enable each to have the use of this sum, and repay it. The time agreed upon is usually as many years as there are partners. Ten numbers are then drawn by lots, which indicate to each person the time at which he will be placed in possession of the common capital.

It is sometimes arranged that the capital shall remain the same, and not be increased by interest; at

others that interest shall be added to it, while the beneficiary of the year is sometimes eliminated from the society, and at others continues a member, while the elimination may commence with either the first or last of the partners. In this case the amount of capital due from each partner is necessarily different, and depends upon the date of his entry into the use of the whole. Thence arise other combinations which may be of interest to the reader, and which will be found in the tables at the end. All these societies rest upon good faith and honour, and any person found wanting would never be admitted into another. Examples of bad faith are extremely rare. I should add that if one of the members should find himself in difficulties in providing his quota, he has little difficulty in obtaining the use of the common capital from the one of his colleagues to whom it becomes due that year, provided he grants him his turn, and advises him some days in advance.

Such, in a few words, is the most common kind of partnership among the Chinese, and almost everyone may be said to take part in it, since it is applicable to all ends, from the student requiring assistance towards his degree, the peasant desirous of entering upon a holding or purchasing a buffalo, to the mother of a family thinking of the marriage portion of her daughter, and even to the street-boy who has begged a few centimes from passers-by.

The individual, unfortunate enough to be unable to

offer his friend even this moral guarantee, the one necessity of these small societies, has another resource. He can emigrate to America or Australia, taking with him the provisions of rice and salt fish, which he buys with the advances made to him by the company which engages him, and there soon saves, on the salaries of two or three francs which he receives, enough to enable him to return home and begin a small business on his own account.

He requires little; life is easy in China—500 francs, for instance, in the hands of a Chinaman are worth 4000 or 5000 in Europe.

The simplicity of the means he employs is great, and his tools few and easy of construction. That, no doubt, is one of the causes which cause him to be held in such dread by Americans, and it is with these means that he will some day prove a successful competitor with Europeans.

He is accused of being too abstemious, but that is because he knows a country, the memory of which never leaves him, where the soil is more fertile, the taxes less heavy, and the civilisation kinder than in the foreign country in which the hardship of his lot has compelled him to seek a temporary shelter. There is really nothing astonishing in the fact that the Chinese do not readily acclimatise themselves in foreign countries.

The general conditions of Chinese civilisation are particularly favourable to the young peasant if he

needs credit. The proprietor who intrusts him with his land well knows he will not destroy it, all he may ask him to assure is the rent; but with a sum of 25 francs he can obtain enough to begin with, and every one knows the value of Chinese land. For instruments a spade suffices, and as for manure the land is sufficiently nourished with what is rejected from day to day. He hardly needs provisions while awaiting the harvests, which succeed each other from day to day. In the event of a hailstorm, he has other plants previously sown and already advanced in growth, all ready to be planted and take the place of those destroyed. He loses a month or six weeks, that is all. There is much difference between Chinese agriculture and ours, and it is a grave error to imagine that cleverness can take the place of training, violence that of justice, and large instruments that of manure. Chinese peasants use instruments much less heavy, less powerful, and less brutish than ours. Their plough is of wood, the mould-board is of wood, excepting sometimes a small iron point when there are stones to turn aside, even the coulter is more often of wood.

Their systems and methods are less scientific than ours, and there is no pretension with it all. They are not in the habit of doing violence to and ill-treating the soil as we are, nor of imposing on it any rule or learned system; they humbly, as it were, pray to it. Nor do they take anything from it which they do not return to it, not even a grain of rice without affording

it the means of repairing its effort. I said a short while ago that their farming was a worship, it might almost be said to be a caress. And the soil surrenders itself to such tender care, and gives itself entirely up to them. By gentleness, industry, and justice, they get all they wish for,—more than we do. That is Chinese farming; it cannot be said to have nothing scientific in it, and yet it is not science. It is not scientific, and it is more than science,—to use an old term, it is wisdom, which forms itself slowly, and cannot be quickly acquired like science. Unless a man be prudent, foreseeing, laborious, good, and just, he should not indulge in agriculture. Its knowledge is not to be acquired, but is inherited from past ages. Without a home, joined with peace, security, good order, and honour, no man can make a good farmer. Without traditions, and thoughtfulness for distant generations to whom the fruit of his labours will descend, no man, in spite of formulas and machines, can rise to the level of the simple Chinese peasant. The secret of the success of Chinese agriculture is summed up in two words—labour and justice.

These are engraved on the heart of every Chinaman, and he hardly notices the want of tools.

I wish I could show to the whole world the ardour of this nation of peasants, to whom no task is repugnant; and how in the evening, when Nature herself seems to have finished her day, one plies the weaver's trade in front of the village houses, while another with

his lantern on his head continues his labour in the fields. His most remarkable quality is perhaps, however, the care he bestows on his plants. No mother could be more attentive to the wants of her child, nor more anxious to satisfy them. The slightest indication of pallor are warnings, and the sight of the peasant carrying carefully the nauseous manure, which is destined to restore the health of the harvest so dear to him, shows conclusively that his heart is as much in his task as his brains, and that the feeling which animates him is one which no disgust can discourage.

And especially wonderful is the cultivation from the plain to the summit of the mountains, so clean and carefully tended as to be comparable only to the finest inlaid work and carved bronze.

He is equally just to his animals; his mules and buffaloes, so restive with us, are subdued to his hands and voice.

Even the wild beasts do not fly from the Chinaman, and all Europeans know that in districts where they are not in the habit of shooting, pheasants and hares are so tame as to be killed with a stick.

The Chinese, however, do not kill them. All animals are created for man, says the Bible of Michelet; the eagle and sparrowhawk salute him at daybreak, the dog follows and escorts him, the horse neighs to him, the bull draws the plough for him, and the fragrant heath of the soil answers for its fruitfulness—all are of

one mind, and all know that man is just and labours for them.

Such is the spectacle presented by Chinese civilisation in the interior of the country, and it is thus that they have learned how to spiritualise the earth and the worship of Heaven.

PART III.

THE STATE.

I.

According to the Chinese, the political body known as a state is essentially based upon the intimate union of the soil and its inhabitants, and upon the freedom of both; and no state can be considered democratic without this fusion in the case of each inhabitant. Then only is the individual a citizen properly so-called, a person in politics and a part of the sovereignty. Movable, and up to a certain point industrial, property cannot in view of their instability be regarded as the equivalent of the possession of the soil, nor consequently be available towards the constitution of the political body or personage.

The Chinese reached this form of constitution about fourteen or fifteen hundred years ago, after wavering for several centuries between the despotic state, during which property in land, both fee-simple and usufruct —tien-mien and tien-ti—remained collective in the hands of the chief of the State, and the oligarchic form

in which it was divided among a number of princes. I have already explained that the soil, while remaining for the fee-simple the collective property of the people, the individual enjoying the tenant right which his labour has conferred upon it, is so much divided that no one is excluded from its use. It is true that by no means every individual exercises political rights, but this applies only to those who, preferring to remain in the family community, choose to delegate their authority to its representative.

Every member of a family, provided he has attained his majority, either by age or marriage, can exercise them directly by demanding the dissolution of the community and establishing himself separately, while the power of those preferring to remain in the family is less lost than is supposed. They certainly do not elect their political representative since he is naturally designated by his rank, duty and charges in the family, but it is well known that all questions interesting to the family are examined in common by all those who form a part of it, both men and women. The same remark applies to all questions which the representative of the group may be called upon to decide elsewhere, so that every member of a family may be considered an elector of first instance. It would be even more exact to say that in China political unity consists in the family, working through its natural mandatory, who may be a woman.

The representative or algebraic coefficient of the

family group is strictly a citizen, according to Chinese conception. If the reader will recall what I have written concerning the organisation of the family and property, he will remember that nowhere is the union of the citizen and the soil more complete, solid and general, and that the citizen is nowhere assured a more real independence and liberty. There is another matter to consider in Chinese political elements—which is, that the unity is not simple and abstract, but an entity provided with all organs, religious, judicial and civil, capable, in one word, of reproducing itself and reconstituting the State. 'A family,' say the Chinese, 'should be a small State.' Autonomy can be carried no further. They are so accustomed to this, that in foreign countries where, as emigrants, there is no blood relationship among them, their first care is to make themselves into an artificial family or fraternity, in which the elected council fulfils all the functions of the natural family, and which they are sworn to obey.

The Chinese laws and customs by which such a council is inspired are much more severe than those of Europe and the different States of America frequented by emigrants, and nothing would be easier than for them to withdraw themselves from their operation, but they prefer submitting to them to exposing themselves to the violent, humiliating and clumsy intervention of foreign justice, and they thus bring upon themselves, in consequence of their strong and deep attachment to the freedom and institutions of their country, the grave

reproach in the eyes of even such liberal foreign Governments as that of the United States—the reproach of forming a State within a State.

In China not only does this fear not exist, but the independence of the citizen, such as it has been defined, seems to make the very condition of the existence of the State. The State, and the Government of the State, must not be confused together, nor must the errors and weaknesses of the second be allowed to compromise the liberty and integrity of the former. Why should a nation be exposed to perish entirely because struck down in one of its elements?

France and England in 1880 were able to defeat the Chinese Government and impose a treaty upon it, but they were unable to compel its acceptance by the nation. The treaty was never published in the provinces, and every time that it was sought to apply an article contrary to the will of the people, the latter protested and reclaimed their rights by demonstrations similar to those of Canton, Tientsin, &c. On such occasions as these it is not the lives only of Europeans which are in peril, but also those of officials, and the very existence of the Chinese Government.

The assemblies of citizens are entirely free. They take place whenever it is considered expedient, without authorisation, and without being called together by the Government or its agents. From their members are elected the councils charged with the administration of the circumscription, commune, canton, arron-

dissement, province, in which the citizens are established.

The mandate of the councillors, of whom the president somewhat resembles the mayor of one of the communes, is for three years, and is renewable. But the citizens do not in any way abdicate their rights; they can still assemble at pleasure, and do not lose the control of their mandatories, whose privileges are revocable at any instant.

The relations between councils elected from each division are free and direct, and when a matter of business has to be passed from one to another, two or three members of council receive from their colleagues the mission to go and explain it before the councils or competent functionaries. In the latter case, if the matter requires submission to the State official, the relations do not cease to be direct, but the delegates receive, even here, those from the councils elected for the division in which the functionary resides. The representation of citizens is confined to the provinces. There is no elective assembly in Pekin, nor any body at all resembling a legislative assembly, a house of peers, or a senate. I shall show later in what manner the places of these bodies are filled. The duties of these councils are of several kinds. They divide the taxes, which they receive and transmit to the State official. They examine into the necessity of public works in their locality, apportion the expenses among the inhabitants, and solicit subscriptions from

the rich, to enable them to relieve the poorer from their share. They propose the execution of works, the interest of which may attach to several communes, and put themselves into relations with the councils of these communes in order to unify enterprise, and secure the direction of such works; or they refer them to the special official of their district if they require the intervention of the State. They are entrusted with the surveillance both of the police and the inspectors, they arbitrate between rival bank proprietors, and submit grave litigation to the arbitration of the communes or the jurisdiction of the State. They superintend public charitable institutions, and are often called upon to pronounce judgment in cases appealed from the different trade corporations.

In the frontier provinces, which are still exposed to the inroads of uncivilised people, the elected councils are charged with the organisation and recruiting of a true national guard, paid by the richer inhabitants, the chiefs of which are nominated without intervention by the mandarins. And it is not a little remarkable that these citizen soldiers, drawing their courage from the hearth, are braver and fight better than the Imperial soldiers.

Wherever there is a State functionary, under-prefect, prefect, governor, or viceroy, the elected councils are put in communication with him, and thus constitute, besides their ordinary functions, a consultative committee, which softens down and facilitates relations

with the citizens, examines the measures instituted by the Government, advises for or against them, suggests those it thinks good, controls the acts of the official, and studies the litigation pending among the communes. Such in its essence and means is the constitution of the national sovereignty in China.

There are in the entire empire 18 provinces, 182 departments, 544 arrondissements, 1293 cantons, and an indefinite number of communes. Taking the population at 537,000,000, the average amounts to 29,000,000 per province, 2,800,000 per department, 900,000 per arrondissement, and 430,000 per canton in round figures.

The canton is, as I have said, the smallest administrative area in which the State is represented by an agent of the Government. In smaller places there are only mayors, yang-yo, whom Europeans often mistake for mandarins. In a canton, the agent is called che-hien, in an arrondissement che-chow, in a department che-fou, in a province tsung-tou. These agents can be likened to our sub-prefects, prefects, governors, and viceroys. Sometimes several arrondissements are united in a single district, and in this case the Government places at the head of it a tao-tai, a governor-general, who has the prefects of the arrondissement under his orders.

It sometimes occurs that two provinces are united under a single viceroy, and thus there are eleven viceroys for eighteen provinces, and there are vice-

royalties which contain as many as 70,000,000 or 80,000,000 inhabitants.

All these officials are at the same time administrators and judicial officers, and from their double jurisdiction an appeal lies to the superior jurisdiction up to the Government of the Empire. Each viceroy possesses a lieutenant, fou-yaen.

There are then eighteen lieutenants, although there are only eleven viceroys. All other officials are supplemented, according to the importance of their district, with two, three, or four assistants or councillors, who can fulfil all their functions. Besides these agents, there is a receiver-general in each province (pou-cheu-se), a criminal chief justice (gan-tcha-se), a chief engineer of public works (fen-chow), and three or four engineers of bridges and paths (fen-sin-tao). These officers hold their appointments from the central power.

II.

The State Government consists of six ministers: the li-pou, or home ministry; the hou-pou, or ministry of finance; another li-pou (the name of which is written in Chinese with a different character from the first li-pou), or minister of rites. The latter may in some respects be likened to the ministry of the interior. This official is also charged with the management of foreign affairs, which are the especial duty of one of the

divisions of the ministry, the tsong-li-ya-men; the ping-pou, or war minister, who himself nominates all his agents and officers; the hing-pou, or minister of justice; and the kong-pou, or minister of public works. Each one of them provided with a consultative committee, the members of which are taken from the great council louy-ko, analogous to the Council of State, and divided into as many services as the business in the department requires. The ministers meet under the presidency of one of their body, or, if the gravity of the occasion requires it, under that of the Emperor. The Emperor himself is assisted by a private council, kin-ki chou. There is also a ministry of the Imperial house, but the holder of the office does not form a part of the Government, and has no share in the Cabinet.

All the officials, from the prefect to the Emperor, bear a heavy responsibility, not only for their private but their public acts, which extends to the acts of citizens, and even to natural events prejudicial to good order and peace. Thus a murder committed in a sub-prefecture brings with it not only a change in the mayor of the commune, but also the ruin of the prefect and sub-prefect.

The same effect follows upon droughts and floods, and it seems difficult to find reasons for such severity, though at the same time there are many disasters which may be avoided with ordinary care and diligence. For instance, floods and droughts may frequently be avoided by the proper management of the

canals, and it is well known that the care of these forms one of the principal duties of officials. The responsibility alluded to, further prevents the official from gradually ceasing to take an interest in events which might affect the lot of the population, and creates between them an effective solidarity which is of considerable importance. It also affords the people an opportunity of ridding themselves of administrators who, without having committed any grave fault, have ceased to merit confidence. If a drought occurs the Chinese do not blame Heaven or earth, but themselves. Every one examines himself, and fasts. The officials cause their confessions to be printed and placarded, and themselves point out their faults and negligences, and those of the people whom their examples or advice should have placed on their guard. They promise to do better in future. Sometimes their apologies are useless, and disgrace pours down like hail, and if it does not come from a higher authority the people themselves take it in hand. During a drought of which I have a lively recollection, since being on my travels I was obliged to fast like all the rest, I saw three or four prefects or sub-prefects ruined and dismissed. In another week the governor would have been dismissed in his turn, but fortunately for him and the viceroy, who would have shared his fate, rain began to fall. If disasters are prolonged or too frequent, the Emperor is replaced, and his dynasty dismissed. All have to pay, by the loss of their posts or their throne, for what the

people lose in comfort and the peasant in his harvest. It is needless to say if such occasions offer opportunities to the people to show their resentment, they are equally available for offering sympathy to those who have been fortunate enough to conciliate them. No man is perfect, and an official probably less so than most; at all events he is more complained of. The people are patient for a long while, and content themselves with remonstrances, until at last, wearied out, the countrymen refuse to pay the taxes, and the townsmen close their shops. There is an end to business, and in three days, if peace is not made in the meantime, the official is ruined. All passes without disturbance.

A general who may have handed over a portion of territory to an enemy; a governor who has allowed an entry into a town in his charge; the ambassador who has not been able to avoid a war, or whose signature has induced the violation of his country's soil, are compelled to commit suicide. The expiation here also seems excessive, but the people are at all events assured that no one will engage lightly in adventures which may cost him his blood and his post, and that if war should be necessary, it will be inevitable as a measure of self-defence. All officials are divided into nine orders, of two classes, and receive a fixed salary. For those of the first order this salary rises from 1620 francs and 180 baskets of rice, but they are authorised to levy upon the taxes a certain sum, varying according to the importance and wealth of the district or of

the department with which they are charged. For a viceroy this sum may amount to 30,000 francs. This right of assessment is the usual cause, though not perhaps so frequent a one as people often say, of the grievances of the people against their administrators. I should add one interesting detail. All the ministries and public offices are open from daybreak to sunset.

I have already stated that in China there is no legislative body, nor anything resembling an assembly, elective or non-elective, charged with the duty of making laws, and which might recall a Senate or House of Lords.

There is nothing astonishing in this, as in so ancient a society all the laws either are made, or ought to have been made. Nothing further is required but essential, general and universal formulas, according to time, place, and circumstances. The Chinese do not believe that the essential, general and universal formulæ, called by the fine name of laws, should be the expression of the will of a single individual. In their opinion law arises from the existence of the individual or society. This law is in man, and he has nothing to do but to allow its free development. Freedom is the first law, or rather the principle of all law. The second condition of existence is solidarity, without which there can be neither society nor individual. There is a third condition of existence, equality, without which solidarity would be a meaningless term. Liberty, solidarity, equality—this is the family in China. It is the image

of the State, and its first phase. All that would lessen the value of the family in the State would not be a law, but a crime; and no law is conceivable other than that arising from the family.

The State, according to the Chinese, is nothing but a large family; and the conditions of the existence of a family—that is to say, the moral principles of freedom, solidarity, and equality—or its unity, being the same always, the character of every law is universal. Holding such ideas, the decision of men coming from distant points of so great an empire would be authority, and not law; and to the Chinese there could be nothing worse or tending more to dissolution than an exclusively legislative assembly. With such ideas and principles, I repeat, how is it possible to think, write, and say, as is incessantly done in Europe, that the social constitution of China forbids all relations with strangers? On the contrary, the truth is, it would be impossible to find another so simple, so universal, and consequently so scientific, so human, and so little exclusive.

III.

It may, however, occur that the need of complementary laws, on a level with, or below those that are essential, may arise, and in all cases the existence of a society and the lot of a State may depend upon exterior facts, phenomena, and questions which it is important

should not be left to be decided by chance or unskilled persons. Their decision should not, of course, be in opposition to or widely differ from the essential laws; and the secondary laws should, of course, be as scientific in their nature as the others. There is only one meeting, not of men, not of wills, but of learned men which answers this requirement; and as a matter of fact the Academy of Sciences at Pekin is the only possible legislative power. Laws are made in this manner. If an official notices in his district a custom which he thinks might be generally observed with advantage, he reports it officially to the Government, when the minister of rites transmits it to the examination of the Academy. If approved by that body, it is communicated to the different provinces for trial, and if finally it is sanctioned by practice, and adopted by the population, it is inscribed in the code and becomes law. But this does not take place until the accession of a new Emperor, so that the proposed law has sufficient time to pass into custom, and if it does not do this it is rejected. Every legal project emanating from the initiative of the Government or of private individuals is thus dealt with. It should be added that the number of these essential and necessary laws is so small that, in spite of the centuries that have passed, the whole of them do not require more than a few pages. This remark applies only to the civil code; the criminal code will be dealt with in another place. It is much longer.

The preparation of laws, it is needless to state, is not the main duty of the Academy of Han-Lin; it is charged with another, which, though not any more its principal function, places it above the Government. But before dealing with its different duties, I should say a few words of its composition. The Academy numbers 232 members, recruited by themselves from among the literati and most eminent savants. Several women have belonged to it already. The State guarantees to each of them the use of a house and garden, with a small money allowance. The surplus of the Academy's resources comes from ancient public endowments and gifts. It is entirely independent of the Government, in spite of the assistance rendered, which cannot be withdrawn. In some respects it may be compared to our ancient universities. It supplies the want of a minister of public instruction and for education of a higher order and the second degree, but possesses no monopoly. No one is obliged to receive instruction in its colleges, and any person is at liberty to open similar schools. All, however, who seek an official career must submit to its examinations, and its dignitaries, as well as its principal agents, are the only ones which possess the rank and honorary title of officials. But, from an educational point of view, its chief object is to promote the education of the nation, and its privileges have no other object than to facilitate this task.

Under the direction of the Academy is a certain staff

composed as follows:—18 (one per province) director-administrators of studies, or rectors, hio-cheu-ta, officials of the 4th order; 189 departmental inspectors, kia-cheou, of the 6th order; 210 supervisors of the colleges in the arrondissements, hio-cheu, 7th order; 1111 principals of colleges of canton, kiao-yen, 8th order; 1521 chiefs of different other institutions, libraries, &c., huin-tao, 8th order. Without going further into the details of the staff of public instruction, I will now proceed to deal with the functions of the Academy more closely connected with the subject under discussion. I have shown how the laws are made. But it is not sufficient to make laws—they must be obeyed, and for this purpose there has existed from remote antiquity an institution which has no equivalent in any other State: the Court of Censors. It is formed of forty members taken from the Academy. Some are placed with the Emperor, and supervise not only his public acts but even those of his private life, which may seem infractions of the fundamental principles of the State.

Among the latter the gravest, and those most severely censured, are any failures in duty to his ancestors or family, and there is no fault which the censors do not find means to attribute to such failures.

I will quote an example of the terms of reprobation in which they address their sovereign. It occurred in 1860, when the allied armies of France and England were threatening the capital. The Emperor, under the

advice of courtiers who wished to fall in with his sentiments, spoke of leaving the palace of Yuen-Ming-Yuen for that of Gehol in Mongolia, and as an excuse for his flight caused hunting parties to be organised on the far side of the Great Wall. One of the censors addressed him in the following terms: 'I, Tsao-Yung-Yang, Censor of the province of Hon-kuang, present this memorial to the Emperor.' Then after explaining the condition of affairs, he continued: 'The proposal of the Emperor to take command of the army would encounter, according to the report of some persons, serious opposition. Disorder had reached its height, but nothing produced so serious an impression as the report in circulation to-day, that your Majesty proposed going to Gehol. This rumour, which I refuse to credit, has caused the greatest consternation. A great number of officials have already in vain entreated your Majesty to re-enter the capital; a vague fear, which no one can dispel, reigns in the minds of all. If the Emperor really departs, the consequent evils will be irreparable. How then does your Majesty consider the people, and how value the ashes of your ancestors? Will you abandon the heritage left to you, like an old garment? How will you be spoken of in history in years to come? Never up till now has a sovereign been found to choose the moment of danger and distress to go hunting, under the pretence that his departure will prevent complications. Let your Majesty therefore allow yourself to be convinced, and return without delay to the capital.'

Another censor went so far as to predict that the Emperor if he went to Gehol would never return to China; while a third warned him that if he put his intentions into execution the people would overthrow the burying-places of his ancestors. At last, in one of the numerous memoirs sent on this occasion, Chung-Kung, minister of state, and twenty-three other dignitaries, censors, &c., adjured the Emperor to return in these terms: 'In moments of public distress a zealous servant should be ready to die at his post in the interest of the public.'

Other members of the Court of Censors are sent, from time to time, on special missions to the provinces, where they inquire into the conduct, both public and private, of the officials, and listen to any complaints of the elective councils.

A certain number are charged with the duty of collecting the materials and documents, serviceable for the future history of the reign, for deposit in a sealed coffer, only to be opened at the death of the Emperor.

Matters of gravity and difficulty, such as a change of reign, interior troubles, or differences with foreign nations, are submitted to a great assembly or grand council composed of all the members of the Academy, ministers and influential personages, when the council see fit to join with them.

IV.

Thus first the nation, then the Academy with the literati, form in reality the Government of China, and as the number of the literati is immense in all the provinces, there are, thanks to them, and to the consideration and confidence which they enjoy, incessant communication and a perfect interchange of views and thoughts between the one and the other. The views of the Academy arrive in the most remote districts with astonishing rapidity for a country as yet unprovided with electrical appliances, and the population show the most remarkable unanimity and readiness to follow them.

There occasionally break out, as lately at Canton, threatening agitations directed not only against those whose acts have brought about the intervention of the literati, but also against the Government, to which they are a source of serious embarrassment.

Beset by the representatives of foreign powers, urged on by their threats and objurgations, and at the same time perfectly conscious of the terrible responsibility weighing upon them, ministers and officials seek by temporising and doubtful expedients, by all possible means in fact, to avoid war on one hand, or a humiliating and onerous peace unacceptable to the people, on the other.

Europeans unacquainted with the political customs of China, do not understand the hesitation of the

officials, whom they accuse of rascality and duplicity—ill-founded reproaches, alike unworthy and undeserved. The day will come when, having ourselves adopted the principles of true democracy, we shall regard other governments in a better light.

If European countries were organised in the same way as the Chinese, their governments would be as much bereft of action and initiative as the latter, and all war would be at an end to-morrow; but unhappily we have not arrived at that point yet. Our civilisations, composed of the different elements introduced by the most varied immigrations, or the products of genius the general tendency of which is towards analysis, are so incoherent, that to preserve them from dissolution we have always sought to provide the unity and solidarity wanting to them by strong political and administrative centralisation. Hence has arisen such a habit of being governed, that we are unable to believe society can exist without government, and our highest dream is a good government, that is to say, a strong one. Our ideal goes no further, and such is our blindness to the existence of what we ourselves do not possess, that we are incapable of suspecting its existence with others. The vigorous and regular breathing, which, coming from the deep lungs of the Chinese nation, keeps all the organs to their task, the healthy and active thought, which, emanating from the Academy as from its brain, carries feeling and life to all parts, seem to us but mysterious

influences, a kind of occult power in which there is nothing to foresee and everything to fear.

The contrary is the fact. In China, civilisation is so synthetic—all institutions so much in unison one with another, so harmonious, that the power of the State and Government are practically non-existent.[1]

It is absolutely indispensable for us to understand this, and until we do we shall never be able to entertain sure and profitable relations with China, but shall be continually cheated and duped not by her, but by the ignorance and versatility of our governments. And yet how valuable her friendship, founded upon a complete knowledge of her constitution and interests, would be to us!

China is certainly not a military power, but she possesses a sufficient number of men for the slightest movement on her part to disturb Europe, and compel us to stand to arms.

At the other extremity of the double continent, what services could she not render us at a given moment, and what difficulties could she not place in the way of another power nearer and readier to assist us!

Nothing could be more unfortunate than the fatuity of those who brought us into conflict.

However that may be, it would be both wise and

[1] There would appear to exist between Europe and China the same difference as between their written characters—the first, alphabetic and analytic; the second ideographic and synthetic. This may explain many things.

dignified, especially on the part of the government of a democratic nation, to endeavour, while there is time, to guide its future policy with China, by the light I have thrown upon its constitution and Government. How many unfortunate mistakes would not have been avoided. It is a puerile idea, at which Chinese ministers themselves would smile if their fears would allow them, to suppose that because a treaty has been extracted from them pistol in hand, it will therefore be accepted by the nation, if not commended to them by the literati. The ambassadors should be accredited as much to the Academy of Han-Lin as to the Emperor. I have already observed that my visit to the literati of the towns where I stopped were of more value to me than the orders of the minister at Pekin.

It appears all the more necessary to insist on these considerations, because very different views are attributed to our government from those which should guide it, in regard to the treaty it expects to obtain from China. The following is the reasoning attributed to it: 'China cannot attack us, and we can attack her; we will therefore blockade her ports, and England, now favourable to China, will bring pressure to bear at Pekin to avoid grave injury to her commerce. Our plenipotentiary, with his treaty in his hand, will bring forward the advantage to China of acquiring without a blow a large part of the north of Tonkin, and with the help of the unforeseen will obtain the signature of a treaty sufficiently favourable to China.' I will not now

discuss whether we are correct or not in thus counting upon the intentions of England, and those of the other powers interested in the commerce of the Far East. I will even admit that the intervention of England may succeed, and we obtain the wished-for treaty; but will the Chinese nation ratify it, and shall we possess Tonkin after conquering it? It has borne the seal of China for fifteen or sixteen hundred years in its customs, institutions and laws. Its system of property, taxation, organisation, liberty and privileges of the family, and worship of ancestors, are the same. The language of the literati is Chinese, and that of the people is derived from it. The Chinese and Tonkinese belong, in one word, to the same family and the same political group. Tonkin has not remained a dependency of China, because it does not enter into the policy of the latter to maintain distant possessions, but once having put down the incursions which the Tonkinese used to make into China, she organised and civilised the country, and retired from it as soon as possible.

The country owes to her its past prosperity and its existence, and the danger to us is that she will be welcomed there whenever it pleases her to return. In view of these circumstances it would appear singularly difficult to seduce her by the offer of a parcel of territory which she now considers her own; and though we may compel the acquiescence of the Chinese ministers, far from having concluded a treaty of peace, we shall

merely have created a permanent state of war, which will oblige us to maintain an army of 50,000 to 60,000 men in Tonkin. An inexhaustible and incessant supply of recruits, whether trained or not in the regular army, will come from the Chinese provinces bordering on the impregnable country which divides them from Tonkin, to supply the places of those killed fighting with us; and though the Chinese ministry will disavow their proceedings, of which they will really be in ignorance, we shall find ourselves at war with the most powerful and irreducible nation in the world. We are following this path, and rushing blindly into the dangers and expenses to which it conducts us, while the probable results are, in my opinion, far different from those which we expect. Since, however, I have been led to speak of the important Franco-Chinese question, I will propose, at the risk of a short digression, to deal with certain points which appear to have escaped the notice of our rulers.

V.

Conquerors' reasons are always specious. Their aim is always to make the genius of their country radiate afar, to extend its influence, to open new markets to its commerce and industry, and consequently to increase the available labour and food for town-dwellers, to bring the blessings of civilisation to backward populations, to free them from despotism, and obtain for them liberty and dignity.

If these prospects appear somewhat doubtful, they at all events appeal to future generations, but in the case in point it so happens that the future has spoken, and has not ceased speaking. There wants nothing but to listen. The hopes with which we flatter ourselves are, as a matter of fact, the same which inspired us on the eve of our wars with Cochin China and China, in 1858 and 1863. That is nearly a quarter of a century ago, and what has been the result? It is not France that trades with Cochin China, and as to China, I have explained above that the exports from Europe have remained nearly the same as previous to 1860, while the exports from China have more than doubled. We sell on an average sixty centimes worth of our products to each Chinaman, and there is no reason to suppose we shall sell more to the Tonkinese. Assuming the latter to amount to 12,000,000 souls, there will be 6,000,000 or 7,000,000 francs (£240,000 to £280,000) worth of trade, when the country, armed and equipped according to its requirements, shall have returned to its normal condition.

Nor must it be forgotten that France will no more possess the monopoly of trade there than in China, where her share amounts to a few million francs at most. The imports from Tonkin to Europe will be more considerable. China sends us 600,000,000 or 700,000,000 francs (£24,000,000 to £28,000,000) worth of tea, silk, &c., and Tonkin will supply us with the same articles, especially silk, in the same proportions.

Here it should be noted that our southern peasants complain greatly of the proximity of the market for Chinese silks established at Lyons, too near the manufactory. I am not concerned here to inquire whether they are wrong or right, only to point out that the promised advantages are by no means uncontested or incontestable. In what I have said I have taken into consideration only the business possible with Tonkin proper. The truth is, that outside our protectorate we shall no longer be our own masters, and to discount the trade we may be able to gain beyond it would be to expose ourselves to possible grave errors, especially if our relations with China, or rather with the Chinese themselves, were not entirely cordial. If of her own motion, or impelled by some exterior influence, she closes her frontiers to us on that side, our castles in the air at once come to the ground. Tonkin, which properly speaking is but one road, becomes a blind alley. A possible trade of 200,000,000 francs (£8,000,000) with the western provinces of China, Yunnan, Kwei-chow, Kwang-si, a part of Se-chuen, &c., has been spoken of.

It is a large total for 50,000,000 inhabitants, considering that our united imports and exports amount to only 1,100,000,000 to 1,200,000,000 francs (£44,000,000 to £48,000,000) for the 500,000,000 which form the total Chinese population. It should also not be forgotten that France will probably be unable to retain more than the smallest part of this trade. It is alleged

that we shall alter this state of things, but we shall not be able to do so. Tonkin is not a desert country, like the interior of Africa. Its population is at least as dense as ours, and we shall not replace it, nor can the customs of a people be any more changed than the climate of a country. Some manufacturers, capitalists, financial companies, more probably foreign than French, or what not, realising the cheapness of cotton, silk, iron, leather, tin, and other products of the soil of Tonkin, the low price of hand-labour and the saving of transport, will be certain to introduce steam machinery from Europe, at a profit to no one but themselves. Already the Manchester Chamber of Commerce is becoming alarmed at a few manufactories recently built at Calcutta. Already the Chamber foresees the loss of its Asiatic customers, the ruin of its national industry, the misery of the workmen, &c., and the future displacement of French, English and other industries for the benefit of the Extreme East. There can be no compensation for this, and no one can tell whether the Tonkinese and Chinese will not eventually find their way to Europe to partake and augment the distress of our fellow-countrymen. Up to the present I have only looked at the question from our point of view. Have the Tonkinese any more reason for satisfaction? At present they are certainly far from happy, but it seems to them that all their ills come from the plundering Annamites, who leave them nothing but their eyes to weep with, and that they have nothing to desire but

to be freed from them. They would wish nothing more than liberty to form their own government and administration, fix, collect and expend their own taxes—enjoy, in short, the liberty and gentleness of Chinese rule. But between this rule and a government such as we are accustomed to, is there not too great a difference for reconciliation? And besides, is it possible to suppose that the Tonkinese would subscribe enthusiastically towards the cost of a protectorate, not only to ensure them against the Annamites, but which would be compelled to assure itself against exterior enemies, and thus require an expenditure on which they are far from reckoning?

Nor is this all; as in China so in Tonkin, there is neither great wealth nor great poverty, excepting that which the Annamite dominion has produced; both are countries of small properties and minor industry. There are but few salaried workmen, but there are many small masters, earning their living at one or more trades, happy and peaceful in the bosom of their families, like persons for whom the morrow has no terrors.

Is it probable that this population will look on with calmness, while masses of capital, accumulated in a few hands as in Europe, invade their country, and, in the usual way, monopolise the land and industry, convert the small masters into salaried workmen, and drag them away from their families to herd in enormous workshops, and plunge them by degrees into the instability and insecurity of the working populations of Europe?

Is it too dark a prophecy to say that a time will come when a movement will take place in Tonkin against foreigners similar to the anti-Semitic movement in Europe? I do not know, but the longer I consider the matter the more sure I am that we have an evil task before us in Tonkin. It may be asked if there was nothing we could do there; the answer is in the negative, and we should have taken things differently from the beginning. The one thing about Tonkin which is neither a dream nor a picture, but a tangible reality, is not Tonkin itself, but the mines situated outside Tonkin proper, on the Chinese frontier, as well as in the western provinces of China, which can be reached only through Tonkin, that is to say, by means of the river which traverses it. There is also a trade which may be opened up with these provinces by the same means. Anything more is a delusion. But did China wait for France to find the wealth hidden in her soil, and acquaint her with the means of arriving at it? Was it France that discovered them? A Frenchman certainly made the first search, but, upon his report, China despatched him as chief of a mission to complete it, and her Government, continually accused of apathy and blind hostility towards Europeans, instructed him to open up the navigation of the Red River, interrupted for three hundred years, and to introduce European industry, which would have been sufficiently represented by three or four financial companies. The mission met with unexpected obstacles from the

Annamites. Dupuis passed on, and conquered all resistance, and his success would certainly have been sustained and recompensed by China if he had not addressed himself to France, who roughly intervened. China then assumed an attitude of reserve. It may be safely stated that but for this fault on the part of our friend, all to the honour of his patriotism as it was, China would have reached the end of her difficulties, or would herself have driven out the Annamites, and the four or five companies referred to would have been in full operation for several years past.

This would have been all there was to do, and I think it is much to be regretted that matters have been differently managed, and that at this moment our soldiers and money are engaged in an enterprise very little to the true interests of the nation and its contributories.

Perhaps the reader, following out my line of thought, may be of opinion that if there be any method of returning to the *status quo ante*, it should be adopted.[1]

VI.

The impediments in the way of any Chinese Government desiring to induce the nation to engage in any enterprise opposed to its liberty and interests, do not by any means all arise from its democratic constitution

[1] This was written before the end of 1883.

and its working; there are more serious obstacles, in the absence of a large army and monetary resources. Several newspapers lately put the number of the Chinese army at 2,000,000 available men—a grand mistake. The Tartar army does not number more than 80,000 effective soldiers, and the Chinese militia does not exceed 400,000 men. In certain eventualities the Government can, if the nation will consent to it, make some addition to these figures, but a number of undrilled men taken from the fields possess only a relative value. The Government is exceedingly poor, although every citizen possesses greater comfort than in any other country. As a matter of fact, the revenues of the State scarcely amount to 1400 or 1500 million francs (£60,000,000), and cannot be increased. Whenever the public expenses exceed the budget they can only be met by means of a public subscription. If the elected councils recognise these expenses as legitimate and necessary, and especially if required for purposes of defence, the subscriptions are abundant, and no doubt as many men could be obtained as there are means of supporting.

But if the demands of Government do not seem justifiable, they are rejected without pity. It should be added that the estimate and control of expenses are made more easy by the fact that China possesses no colonies, and its defence is therefore confined to its own territory.

State borrowings, the ordinary expedient of govern-

ments, were unknown twenty years ago, and the basis on which the Europeans who introduced the practice have established it is such as to afford only small resources. The administration of the customs in the ports open to foreigners is entrusted to Europeans, and from this source the Chinese Government receives 150 million francs yearly (£6,000,000), free from the control of the nation. These revenues form the security on which English, French, and German bankers have issued loans at from nine to ten per cent., and they may be termed the extraordinary resources of the Chinese Government. It will be noticed that they are both limited and contingent, which, under certain circumstances, might be productive of grave consequences. The ordinary resources are the produce of the land tax, the revenue from mines, and the salt monopoly. The civil list of the Emperor, as has already been stated, is formed by the produce of his flocks in Mongolia, by a part of the salt revenues, and by the tributes of states vassal to China.

With such means as these, the sources of which have never changed, the Chinese Government has been able to satisfy the needs of the population for a period of at least fifteen hundred years.

VII.

We now come to a question which has often arisen regarding the relations of Europe with China, and

which at this moment presents itself with more force than ever—and that is, the motive of the antipathies shown to strangers, which are sometimes attributed to an integral part of the Chinese constitution, which, like the Jewish and Mussulman law, interdicts all relations with foreigners; sometimes to a narrow egotism; and sometimes to ridiculous precautions, and well or badly founded mistrust. The reader knows what to think. What I have recently stated on the subject of the State loans, is sufficient to show the real causes of Chinese repulsion for foreigners. All governments resemble each other, and that of China holds its own only through the precautions with which the institutions of the country have surrounded it.

Centuries, however, have been requisite to contrive the needful guarantees against any attempts it might be induced to make against the sovereignty of the people, and if it were offered the means of freeing itself from all control, it may be feared it would accept them, though doubtless only to use them, in the first instance, against the difficulties and embarrassments created by those who first proposed such expedients to it. How would it be possible, however, to ensure that they should not some day be turned against the citizens whose peace and security are its first charge? The members of the Government are well aware of this, and while bowing to the exigencies of the moment, they owe us a grudge for the danger we are creating for the State. The literati are well aware of the peril, and

lose no opportunity of acquainting the people of it, who, in their turn, press it upon the Government.

This is but one point; there are many others. Our trade, though not taking any considerable product into the country, disturbs the relations which centuries have created between production and consumption, and upsets a political economy the results of which, after all, are at least equal to those we have been able to obtain in Europe. Opium, a terrible plague to society, is also introduced, and though opium-smokers are not so numerous as is supposed, since the consumption of this article does not exceed 400,000,000 francs worth (£16,000,000) for 537,000,000 of inhabitants, it has already created considerable disorder in the management of the soil. The cultivation of the poppy, forbidden until 1860, has been authorised since Europeans compelled the Government to admit its product, and occupies millions of acres, which the people see taken away from more necessary cultivation with much dislike.

It is alleged that opium was already among the habits of the people, but all society contains the germs of all possible vices. I shall give, later on, the moral reasons of the development of this in particular, but the physical reasons are among those which the Government possessed the right and duty to restrain, and Europe cannot escape the blame of disregarding both this right and this duty. In 1881, when in Japan, I heard a story of a ship bearing 100 opium-smokers, sent by a European house from

Shanghai to introduce this vice. There is nothing European, up to the noisy and pompous mode of life of the small merchants in China, which is not an aggression upon the simple, equal, and modest manners of the Chinese.

Even official relations, always courteous in Europe, change their fashion in China. Our diplomatists often show towards Chinese officials an attitude too much impressed with the feeling of the superiority of the civilisation they represent. But from this point of view it must be confessed it is principally to the missionaries that we owe the worst conflicts we have had with the Chinese. I do not speak of their doctrines, but of their personal acts and the means to which they have recourse, though by no means all are guilty in this respect; on the contrary, there are some who blame the excess of zeal, the imprudence, and the abuses they witness. The latter have mostly abandoned attempts at conversion, and have given themselves up to the study of the language and books. Living as peaceful inhabitants of the villages to which they belong, and quietly and simply fulfilling the duties of their ministry in the midst of their small flocks, while retaining as much leisure as possible for their studies, they receive from the people and mandarins all the consideration usually accorded to literati. From time to time they send to Europe considerable works, the value of which as a whole should be neither despised nor exaggerated, as I shall explain later on, but which contribute very largely

to the increase of our knowledge. Most of the ancient Jesuits of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries —Amyot, Ricci, Remare, Verbiest, Greubil and others— belonged to this group. Learned men as well as literati, these ancient Jesuits understood better than their successors, what a formidable obstacle their propaganda was meeting with, and they endeavoured to avoid it by conciliating Christian worship with the two great national worships of China; and they were interested not only in not speaking ill of the native religion, but in showing it up in the light most favourable to their views. Their panegyrists assure us, that if they had been left alone, 'all China would be Catholic by to-day.' But a distinction must be allowed. If it is meant that Catholicism would have ended by triumphing and becoming the exclusive religion of the majority of Chinese, it is, in my opinion, a pure illusion, of which the reader should by this time be convinced. If it is meant that it would have been able, like Buddhism, for example, to add its fundamental ideas to Chinese civilisation, I have less to say against it; but that would involve the same qualities as Buddhism, a complete renunciation of all supremacy and domination, both temporal and political, to which it is not probable the new Church would long have remained resigned. However it may be, denounced by the Dominicans and Lazarists, suspended and suppressed by Pope Clement XI., the Jesuits were obliged to renounce their plans, and the scandalous and violent scenes which obliged the Chinese Govern-

ment to expel all parties, are too well known to require repetition.

Since the readmission of missionaries to China in 1840, those sent have been simply catechists, expressly forbidden to meddle with any questions which might tend to the renewal of old disputes. All scientific research is prohibited, and the few who, in consideration of exceptional ability, are permitted by their bishop to occupy themselves with any other subject than their duties, are strictly confined to linguistic studies and compilations. In this manner they render, and have rendered, great services, and I am by no means sure that it is to be regretted that the field of their operations is more limited than before: the interests of true science probably do not suffer thereby; and what has been already said of Father Remare and his tendency to force texts out of their meaning, is an instance of the danger even the best instructed are liable to cause to themselves and others.

Some even go further than to alter the meaning of a character. There is extant a translation of the Y-King, the principal book of the Chinese, made by Father Regis, a former Jesuit, in which not only has the meaning been incorrectly rendered, but some commentaries added by Confucius have been replaced by the author with his own.[1]

That this unjustifiable proceeding is exclusively

[1] See the preface to *Vestiges des Principaux Dogmes Chrétiens*, by M. Boubelt, already referred to.

attributable to the religious education of Father Regis, is not the opinion of some sinologues, according to whom there are many of the laity quite capable of similar faults. Knowledge of a language is not sufficient to make a good translator, to it must be added independence of mind and character and some preliminary knowledge of the subject, and the combination of these qualities, not common among the laity, is very rare among priests. Nevertheless, however objectionable want of fidelity and consequent violence to the sacred books of China may be on the part of a translator, they have not, directly at all events, been the cause of bloodshed, which is more than can be said of all the results of the religious zeal of the missionaries. Those, more numerous now than the first group, who make the propaganda of the faith their sole aim and object, however high their education and knowledge of the Chinese language, are nothing but a plague, and the most terrible agents European civilisation can have in China.

Their motto is, 'Everything for the glory of God and the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church.' 'We are Frenchmen, but Catholics first,' remarked Father Lemaître to me, and he made the same remark to General Montauban.

As an instance of the application of this motto I will give the following example. In 1880 our plenipotentiary, Baron Gros, had as his senior interpreter a priest of the foreign mission, M. Delamarre, who,

contrary to his duty and the trust reposed in him, contrived to insert in the Chinese text of the treaty, without the knowledge and against the will of the plenipotentiary, a clause which might at any time have provoked war between France and China, and which has already done much harm.[1]

This clause compels the Chinese Government to restore to the existing missionary bodies the property confiscated from the Jesuits 150 years ago. The difficulty in the way of the restoration of this property, which has since passed through many hands, has been much divided, and is in many instances covered with dwellings, is so great as to induce the Chinese Government, true to its signature, although perfectly cognisant of the fraud of Abbé Delamarre, to make every possible sacrifice to redeem it. At Chong-King-Fou, for instance, in Se-Chuen, they offered double the quantity of land and sufficient funds for the construction of a Catholic church. The missionaries unfortunately did not show the same spirit of conciliation in the vindication of their rights. The answer given by M. Desflèches to the proposal in question was that they desired the land on which the true God had been worshipped, and no other. Thence arose the disturbances and plunder of the Christians in Chong-King in 1862, and the consequent indemnity paid by the Chinese Government, and thence arose also the murder of two mis-

[1] I have this fact from several sources, among others from M. Delamarre, who boasted of it.

sionaries imprudently sent by M. Desflèches to a village where these events, and the severity of their repression, had produced a paroxysm of hate against the missionary body in general.[1]

In 1870 the Society of the Sainte-Enfance had, after several years without success, collected at Tien-Tsin a certain number of children whose parents had been compelled to abandon them by the floods of the Yellow River. The parents, having recovered from their misfortunes, reclaimed their children, but as they had been baptised, the Sainte-Enfance refused to give them up and for greater security despatched them to another province. The consequence was the massacre not only of the missionaries, but of the French residents at Tien-Tsin and of the Consul.

'If I had been there,' remarked to me once M. Delaplace, Bishop of Ning-Po, also a Lazarist like those in charge of the orphanage at Tien-Tsin, 'this misfortune would not have occurred.'[2]

I will tell another story which occurred in 1860, when, at the call of the missionaries, France sent an army to China. The French arms were victorious, but as it was for the missionaries' sake they came, so it was

[1] M. Mabileau, and another whose name I have forgotten. M. Desflèches obtained a large indemnity for the murder of these priests.

[2] It may be noted that M. Delaplace made no false boast. A few years before, in 1866, having committed the same error of refusing to return a baptised child to its parents, he had the good sense to ask our advice, and the prudence to be guided by it.

they who were the conquerors, and as testimony to their power, churches were built everywhere—at Ning-Po, Shanghai, Canton, Pekin—out of the war indemnity, assisted by the liberality of the French Government. The Bishop of Canton desired to build, instead of a church, a cathedral at a probable cost of millions of francs, for what reason is not apparent, since the town contains but 300 or 400 converts. With what funds the desired consummation was to be effected is also not apparent, since he, like his colleagues, had received only a portion of a sum of 100,000 francs (£4000). 'God will provide,' said the bishop, and the foundations were made with the money allotted, and the first stone laid, at which ceremony the viceroy who had been duly invited was present. This effected, the materials were at an end. Application was accordingly made to the Consul. 'Would it not be possible to obtain authority to take the stones which have fallen from such a hill, and which obstruct the road not far from the town? It would be doing a public service by opening the road.' The Consul duly obtained authority from the viceroy, and funds being wanting a further levy was made on the war indemnity. Shortly after, the material again fell short.

'If the loose stones could be taken from the hill it would prevent a public danger.' Authority was duly obtained and a further levy made on the war indemnity. Once more the stones fell short.

'Ah, Consul, if you could only get permission for

us to dig into the mountain. A mere nothing would suffice.' 'Yes,' said the viceroy, 'but do not disturb the burial-ground, and do not dig in front of it, or you will endanger its safety, and the people will be angered.' The operations proceeded, but so far from a mere nothing being sufficient, they were carried so far that the townspeople became annoyed and gave free vent to their feelings. The viceroy gave warning. 'Never mind, let us go on,' and the operations proceeded, until one day the people attacked the converts.

There are numerous instances of this kind. A child is converted, for example, and in consequence renounces ancestral worship and his contribution to its expenses. His brothers and relations demand that he shall give up his share of his inheritance, which he refuses to do. A lawsuit follows, with which the missionaries interfere; they in their turn are requested to take their departure. This is called persecution in the annals of the propagation of the faith.

A criminal is being pursued, and requests baptism, which is granted together with a temporary asylum. The magistrate continues the pursuit and arrests the guilty person. This again is called persecution in the annals.

The dream of most missionaries is to possess the right to administer justice to their converts, and they would not hesitate to bring about a new war if they could hope to obtain in a new treaty a clause giving

them this right, even if gained after the fashion of M. Delamarre.

And was it not thus that at Rome Christianity made its earlier progress?

Power in every form is the object of the most ardent desires of the missionaries, and in fact it is not only a proof of success, it is the best means of retaining it. M. Delamarre himself told me that on one occasion, not being received by the viceroy with all the honours reserved for mandarins of high rank, he entered in a rage, struck the usher whose business it was to see that the countersign was respected, and violently crossing the courts and apartments, presented himself before the viceroy with threats in his mouth. He claimed, certainly, the position of French delegate, but with what object?

M. Faurie, Bishop of Kwei-Chow, and the Bishop of Chensi, take the insignia of the highest officials in the towns they inhabit, and traverse the provinces surrounded by escorts in which the cross, banners, mitre, Catholic ornaments, and red gowns of the choristers, are confused with the fans, parasols, and all the paraphernalia of Chinese authority, provoking the laughter and jests of some and the anger of others. And the most remarkable point is that personally, and whenever they can forget the motive of their presence in China, the missionaries are, as a matter of fact, the best and most agreeable people in the world, very amiable, and always ready to be of use.

Looking upon their polished, gentle and courteous demeanour, they appear the best of men, and listening to their patriotic conversation, it is not to be wondered at that their influence, however problematical, should appear desirable.

But they are not to be trusted, and however devoted and good they may seem, they lose their heads the instant that the interest of their religion or congregation appears in danger. They then become false egoists, hard and covetous, shrinking from no means, not even the sacrifice of *your* life, to enable them to reach either their own ends, or those imposed upon them by their position.

I shall never forget the difficulties placed by M. Desflèches, the Bishop of Se-Chuen, in the way of my journey in that province, or the tricks he played me after my arrival there. He feared that I should show the converts, preserved up till then from all profane contact, that all Frenchmen did not frequent mass, nor bend their knees before the bishops nor kiss their pastoral ring.

I escaped his toils, however, and approached the frontier of Se-Chuen, where I found a missionary selected by the bishop, who accompanied me everywhere as guide and interpreter, and showed himself full of devotion. The rogue was playing me false. The bishop, I discovered later, had caused a report to be spread that I had come to investigate the details of the rising against the converts, and to hasten the

punishment of the guilty, and this report was confirmed by the presence of the missionary at my side. This was the object of his politeness! Then one day, in spite of my refusals, warnings, and precautions, I found myself, without knowing how, in the midst of a church on fire. He had been cleverer than I, and though I returned from his province, he cannot be said to have helped me. On the contrary, he did all he could to leave me there.

I will give one more instance of a graver nature, since it cost the lives of several Frenchmen and the humiliation of our flag, without taking into consideration the murder of thousands of natives.

This event took place in Corea. Father Feron, being discontented with the king and government, resolved to replace them. It was only a question of reaching, during the night, the ancient and rich burial-places of former kings, carrying away their contents, and returning them only on certain conditions. He resolved to make the attempt, and came to Shanghai, where he chartered a Portuguese merchant vessel, the captain of which was a thorough scamp, promised the plunder to the crew, and departed with the ship. The effort failed, and the missionaries who had remained in Corea were hung. Father Feron was sent back to France by the legation.

Some time afterwards, the admiral commanding the French squadron in Chinese waters, urged on by other missionaries, determined to avenge the death of their

predecessors; he went to Corea, whence he returned beaten, with the loss of several men, killed and wounded.

With this narrative I will end this chapter, and I trust the reader will not misunderstand the motives which have led me to write it.

PART IV.

THE GOVERNMENT.

One word continually recurs in Chinese conversation, the word *gen*,[1] which should be literally translated as *humanity*, but to which the Chinese have given a second meaning signifying *solidarity*. *Gen* is not an aspiration to solidarity, a feeling or a virtue such as charity, love, or fraternity: it is a fact, a condition. Nor does it include only living beings, its tendency is to cause to live, to call into life as many beings as possible. Humanity, or solidarity, would in fact be meaningless in a country where population was so sparse that the inhabitants were scarcely acquainted with each other.

Let me recall the religious precepts already quoted: 'The past and future should be as the present; there are things hidden, but they exist; you cannot see the entire human race, but it exists, and it is your duty to aid in its most complete manifestation.' If *gen* thus defined can be made a reality, it is the source of all

[1] Pronounced as in generation.

happiness; abundance, riches, peace, liberty, happiness, all result naturally from it. If it is wrongly conceived, solidarity does not cease, because its unity of essence is indestructible, but it is solidarity in disunion, inequality, in evil, and the inevitable consequences, poverty, war, slavery, misfortune of every kind, follow. There is nothing surprising then in the frequent recurrence of the word.

Gen has no other foundation than the unity of Heaven, humanity, and earth, or the physical universe; and as, according to their doctrines, man is the intermediary between Heaven and earth, and the incarnation of both, the Chinese have named this method of considering matters, humanity.

Gen has not remained a purely ideal quality; the Chinese have brought all their institutions into conformity with it. Spiritually speaking, these are the worship of Heaven, and of ancestors, and physically, the pains they take that the union of the soil may be a reality not only with humanity as a whole, but in, and with each of its members. The family hearth reposes on the patrimonial land, and the possession of lands bestows a political value upon the citizen.

It is, in short, upon the right and duty, as absolute one as the other, and as the idea from which they both take their rise; it is upon this right and duty of each man to union with the soil that they have established the collective ownership of the soil, the system of usufruct of property, the return to the

State of uncultivated land, and the system of taxation on area.

The *jus uti et abuti* of the Roman law would be in China a sacrilege and a crime. Free soil always free has become with the Chinese the connecting link between men, and the most efficacious instrument of their multiplication and solidarity. *Gen* incarnated is the foundation on which their civilisation has been built, a civilisation which has borne fruit little known elsewhere.

A population of a density so unknown to other societies that it is as if the dead, called again to life, augmented the roll of the living, has arisen without encountering insurmountable obstacles. Not only has its progress been closely followed by an equivalent increase in the produce of the soil, but it has been able to provide for its moral needs, in a manner unknown to any other nation.

If liberty, the first of their needs, is naturally one which a people would know how to seek of its own accord, no other people has brought the part of it which it cannot keep to such an irreducible minimum as the Chinese.

As *gen* became a reality, and the density of the population increased, taxation diminished for each person until it reached its present minimum of 3 francs (2*s.* 6*d.*) per head, and as the territorial circumscriptions became more and more thickly populated, the action of Government became less and less perceptible,

until at present it is sufficiently assured by a single official to more than 400,000 citizens.

Gen has therefore had two immense results. By the rights and privileges necessarily attached to the family institution of which it is the base, it encourages citizens to preserve their independence, and by the nature of the means Government holds at its disposal, not only does *gen* lay down its functions and powers in a manner which prevents any usurpation, but it incloses them in such limits that the progress of things has reduced them to almost nothing.

Gen, or, in other words, the social, political. economical, and religious conception, which is at bottom the whole of Chinese civilisation, is of capital importance from the point of view of the intervention and abstention of Government in the State.

For this reason, before dealing with the functions of Chinese government, I have devoted a small space to an explanation of its nature.

I.

The Chinese did not discover the force and object of their Government at the first attempt, and although they had carefully preserved the doctrines which former sages had laid down for their guidance, they did not reach their goal till after numerous and painful experiences. The application of the doctrines referred to further required so great intelligence that for

centuries it could only be directed by a small number of individuals of exceptional gifts.

The *Rites of the Dynasty of the Cheou*,[1] who seem to have had especially allotted them the important duty of initiation from the second to the fourth century before our era, are simply a collection of laws and rules directed towards the realisation of the union of humanity and man with the earth.

Almost all the officials of that epoch were husbandmen. Some presided over the irrigations; not only did they cause the execution of the necessary works, they indicated the favourable moment. It was the duty of others to watch over the sowing, and to indicate the most favourable crops to the people; and of others again to see that manure was properly prepared and applied, and all waste provided against. Others again formed, in the less populous parts of the territory, military colonies, to which they taught the practice of agriculture.

All agricultural operations were conducted with the utmost attention to detail. Progress, civilisation, *gen*, were developed despotically by authority. This initiation lasted for centuries, but was eventually completed, the Empire peopled, the earth animated and cultivated. The breath of man and of the soil ascended together to Heaven.

But unfortunately, the sovereign had acquired the habit of despotism, and then commenced that long

[1] Translated into French by Ed. Biot.

series of reclamations and reactions, of which I have previously spoken, and which ended, about the third or fourth century of our era, in the formation of the government which is the subject of this study.

The people gradually acquired more and more power during this period of trial, and learned to add the results of experience to the teachings of the Cheou. It learned not only to unite its lot with the soil, but to govern itself, and acquired from the land not only life but freedom. It learned to think, compare, and reason for itself. The literati rising up on all sides added their own aphorisms, derived from observation, to the philosophic and semi-sacred axioms of former sages.

'Order does not arise from power,' said they. 'Society is governed from within to without.'

'The family is a small state, the State is a federation of families.'

'The State is but a society of mutual assurance; the more numerous the assured the less are the risks, and the lighter the charges.'

'Government is but the syndicate of society.'

'Nothing is more difficult than to indicate the limits of its action; its function should be to preserve existing institutions from all internal and external attack, while abstaining itself from meddling with them.'

'It is no part of its duty to hinder the progress of civilisation, but to keep it within the limits traced out for it by tradition.'

'If Government conform to these rules, it will never be tempted to infringe them.'

'If it observe them, families will multiply, and will themselves provide for the business of their communes and provinces, with which Government will not then be troubled.'

'The best Government is that which is least seen.'

The Chinese seem hence to regard Government as a foreign object, from which progress should either relieve them entirely, or at all events reduce its functions to the lowest possible point.

This may be accepted as their ideal, and the following pages will show how far it has been realised.

II.

The number of ministries forming the Government is the first indication,—there are but six; the enumeration of the ministries is the second,—they are: personal, finances, rites (that is, home and foreign affairs united), army, justice, and public works. That is all. There are therefore no ministers of religion, agriculture, public instruction, fine arts, posts, commerce, marine, or colonies. The duties of such ministries are not absolutely non-existent, but are so light as not to require mention. Some of course would be entirely superfluous. There can be no necessity, for instance, for a ministry of public worship in a state possessing no religion but that of civilisation, nor other worship than a domestic form

such as the ancestral, and an official form consisting of four or five annual solemnities presided over by the Emperor. In such a civilisation, the ministry of public worship is distributed everywhere, first in each family, then among the other ministries, but has no special place. The Chinese consider that to concern themselves with the beliefs and superstitions of private individuals, would be to afford them a countenance and importance of which they are unworthy. None are suppressed, because no one has the right to inquire into the creed of individuals, but it would be unjust to make them a charge on the public exchequer. They are permitted perfect freedom on condition that they do not trespass beyond the proper limits of thought into action detrimental to the common good. The Government thus has occasionally confiscated Buddhist pagodas to return them to the people, and steadily resists all encroachment on civil authority by foreign religions. These are the limits of the function of Government in religious matters,[1] and it will be observed that if the ministry of public worship was originally an official institution,

[1] For the information of any reader curious to know the cost to the Chinese of these different private creeds, Taouists, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Christians, &c., I may add that, according to the calculations of a Protestant missionary, the total cost equals the taxation of the country, or three francs per head of the population, all included.

It is considerable, but not excessive, if compared with that of Christian worship, baptisms, burials, marriages, masses, not including the official budget of public worship.

it has long since been, so to speak, reabsorbed by the nation.

A similar reabsorption, which has seemed to me one of the most marked proofs of the success of Chinese civilisation, is that of the ministry of agriculture. I have already stated that under the Cheou dynasty it formed the entire government. It has completely disappeared, and yet nowhere is agriculture in so flourishing a condition; and this condition is due to justice. I may be accused of repetition, and yet it is not to me but to the elaborate Chinese civilisation that the fault should be ascribed. But what higher praise can be given it, or higher proof of unity afforded, than that all its aspects should be lighted by the same rays, or all its rays mingled in the same light. Do justice to the soil, return to it what it yields to you. To rob it of its remnant is a crime; do not throw it into the sea, do not export your land. The soil is the body of humanity. Unite yourselves to it as the soul to the body. Do justice to the peasant. Do not take from him the fruit of his labour, of the sweat which has fertilised your fields. Do not add a crushing tax to the toil which already bends him. Let the land reserved for pleasure pay at least as much as that reserved for produce. Then the fruits of humanity, *yen*, will be assured. And they have already borne them.

The generations have increased. Thanks to the density of the population, the earth has reached a degree of fertility hitherto undreamed of. Harvest

succeeds harvest, in the same field and in the same year, and 500 men live in comfort here on an area where only a few subsisted a thousand years ago. There is no reason to suppose this number cannot further increase. Given humanity, equity, unity, and good morals, as Confucius required, and what more is needed will be found in the heart, head, and limbs of every Chinaman. All are born husbandmen ; religion, culture, in a word, life, are in the blood of the people, and hence there is no need for a minister of agriculture.

With regard to public instruction a distinction must be made between the primary and superior ; the former is absolutely private, and is afforded either in the schools attached to the ancestral temples, where such exist, or in private schools, which any person is at liberty to open at pleasure.

The domestic system, under which education is a most important obligation, renders all compulsory legal or governmental action unnecessary and useless, and involves the incidental advantage that the Government is not concerned with the lot of the teaching staff, who are always certain of a sufficient number of scholars. The richer parents pay for the poorer, and there is not a child in China who cannot go daily to school with more certainty than, alas! ours to the baker's. I have already mentioned the objects of Chinese instruction, and I shall deal with the matter in detail later on in a special chapter upon elementary and secondary education.

Before going further, however, there is one point I desire to bring under notice. It is well known that Chinese writing is ideographic, that is to say, that each character does not represent a letter as in phonetic alphabets, or even a word, but an idea, and consequently a child learning to read and write fills his memory, not with words only, but with ideas, which he is required to explain, comment upon, and compare, a process which cannot fail to quicken his intelligence.

I have frequently witnessed the astonishment of Europeans, when rallied on the awkwardness they have displayed in dealing with difficult symbols, to find themselves set right by children of ten to twelve years; and who moreover showed wonderful correctness of judgment. I have myself also been much surprised when conversing with Chinese children on serious topics, to note the clearness and justice of their answers and reflections.

No doubt family teaching, with its regular readings and fortnightly councils, the inscriptions visible in profusion on all the buildings, and roads, the sides of the canals, the approaches to the bridges, the public and private cemeteries, all of which recall a duty, or an inspiring thought, and above all, the judicial power systematically exercised under their eyes by their parents, suffice to explain the childish precocity which is so striking to us. But it is a question worthy of the reader's consideration, whether the writing, which is at the base of this integral method of education and

instruction, is not in itself one of the principal causes of the fact to which I have drawn attention. However that may be, it is certain that the people possess an amount of good sense, and a remarkable sum of ideas, which we may suppose is due to their system of primary instruction.

As for superior instruction, which is accessible to all, but for which the taste and desire vary in different persons, it would appear unfair that the Government should be required to undertake the expenses of its administration, for it would fall upon the general taxpayer. It has not, therefore, done so; but as the matter is one of too great importance to be left entirely to the initiative of private individuals, its direction has been placed in the hands of the Academy of the Han-Lin. The Government contribution is limited to the strictly necessary expenses, the others are covered by donations and by the students of all ages, who with so dense a population are always numerous.

Thus the directing staff already enumerated is paid from the government subsidy, the teaching staff by the pupils.

Nevertheless, though the State is so thrifty as regards public money, it is sufficiently liberal in other rewards to education.

All appointments, even the highest, are filled from among the literati according to their several degrees, and the senior graduate of the competition for the doctorate may even aspire to the hand of a daughter

of the Imperial house. Should the Emperor possess no daughter, he adopts the child of one of his ministers and bestows her upon the fortunate man in marriage. Among more positive advantages the doctor ranks with a minister or viceroy, whose duties he fulfils after travelling for two or three years in different provinces, where he is always received with Imperial honours. He has the right, accorded only to ministers, viceroys, and the great inspectors of public instruction, of living in the splendid palaces of the universities. His first duty is invariably to visit his parents, to thank them for the honour he owes to their care, and to take them marks of distinction from the Emperor.

Fortunately or unfortunately, all the literati cannot become doctors or even bachelors, for the competitions are very severe, and even all bachelors cannot hope for official appointments, which are few in number. The rest fall back among the crowd, and contribute to the raising of its intellectual level by the different professions they embrace. It is easy now to comprehend the reasons against the representation of the fine arts in the Government, or their official encouragement, as although held in the highest esteem, and spoken of—music especially—with the utmost enthusiasm by the literati, they are not considered a part of the proper business of the State.

One of the first emperors of the present dynasty paid the French painters who decorated his palace from his privy purse.

There is no official school of art, nor is any grant in aid afforded to art in any form; the Chinese consider that its votaries are sufficiently repaid for any sacrifices they may elect to make, and that it would be scandalous that any expense should fall upon the public. There exists among the people, however, so large a number of amateurs of art in all its forms, that I do not think there are in proportion fewer musicians than in Germany, or fewer draughtsmen or painters than in France or Italy. All servants are acquainted with some form of musical instrument, and almost all workmen are capable of decorating a house. Many of the bridges are as fine as any to be found in Europe, and the canals are, as public works, inferior to nothing existing in Europe previous to the tunnelling of the Mont Cenis. I have already stated that the theatres, even in the most distant parts, find a sufficiently numerous public to enable them to play several times a month. Nevertheless, if I were obliged to deal with the æsthetic value of Chinese art, I could not defend it from all points of view, and still less could I compare it with that of Europe, in spite of the fact that the latter has of late years borrowed much in decorative effect from the Chinese. I am, however, convinced that art, generally speaking, is more widely spread among the people than in Europe; and, in fact, if art be of its very nature symbolic, how can a nation, where every individual knows how to read and write so symbolic a character as the Chinese, fail to be artistic?

Among the favourite recreations of the Chinese is that of hiring for the day a boat on some large piece of water in a beautiful part of the country. The party start in the morning with pencils, ink, and paper, and while away the time between meals in composing verses on various subjects either set or chosen by each individual at pleasure. Those who prefer music take part in some lyric society, of which there are many. It will be seen, in short, that art is no more neglected in China than elsewhere, and that the Chinaman does not spend his whole existence bowed down to the earth. Poetry and music are not the only amusements; I believe I am still a member of a nautical society in virtue of one or two prizes of eight francs each instituted by me once when I arrived, during a regatta holiday, in the neighbourhood of the small town of Hou-Pe, on the bank of the Yang-tse-Kiang.

The postal service is left to private energy, and, thanks to the competition always existing in an active and numerous population, I have never heard any serious complaints of the exactitude of the service.

For State purposes the Government employs mounted couriers, who cover enormous distances in an incredibly short space of time; I have been assured, for instance, that the 400 or 500 leagues between Pekin and Hankou or Chen-tou-sen can be traversed in urgent cases in less than five days. Europeans, certainly, resident in Shanghai have been more than once surprised by news known and spread among the Chinese several days

before the arrival of steamers sent expressly to bring it.

Each minister attends to the conveyance of his own despatches. 'The best minister is all the world' is a common Chinese saying, and it appears especially true of the ministry of commerce. If a people is numerous it is because it is prosperous, and if it is prosperous it is because business is active, and if business is active there is no need for a ministry of commerce. The duty of Government, therefore, is to place no impediment in the way of the increase of the people, to provide them with just laws, and fair and light taxation, and to leave them as much as possible to manage their own affairs without interference.

The Chinese, therefore, possess no minister of commerce. The custom-houses and statistics belong to the department of the finance minister. It may be alleged that though this system may have answered well when China had no foreign commercial relations, now that she has treaties of commerce with western powers she must need a special minister. I have already replied to this. It must not be forgotten that the taxation amounts to but three francs per head of the population, and a country so fortunately situated has but little need of commercial treaties. What competition has she to fear, or what imports, except perhaps that of opium, to be afraid of? What exchanges would she have to prohibit? The views of the Chinese Government are certainly not in conformity with those of

Europe; but even in Europe there are persons who are by no means satisfied as to the excellence of European theories. In certain exceptional cases the Government forbids the export of certain articles of first need, and may thus inconvenience a few merchants and speculators, but such measures are occasional, of short duration, and in no way weaken the general doctrines in matters of exchange. Europe has imposed treaties of commerce on China, and China, in whose opinion such treaties are contrary to true liberty, or at all events opposed to the true interests of the people, first mistrusted these demands, and subsequently, when compelled to yield, converted them into fiscal instruments. She is sometimes reproached with abusing her rights in this respect, but what is there with which she is not reproached?

Before the establishment of Western commerce and the treaties arising from it, the duties levied on foreign imports from Annam, Siam, and neighbouring countries, were lower than at present, and even now those on European goods amount only to an ad valorem duty of 5 to 6 per cent. for most articles, 8 to 12 on a few others, and 33 per cent. on opium only. Omitting opium, united Europe has succeeded with great difficulty in effecting a yearly sale of cotton and hardware amounting to 50 centimes (*5d.*) per head of the Chinese population, while China sells at least 3 francs (*2s. 6d.*) worth of her products to each Frenchman. The advantages hoped for from the treaties have come to

this, and all efforts have been made in vain against the small figure of 3 francs (2*s.* 6*d.*) of taxation.

There is obviously no necessity for commercial treaties, nor for a ministry to direct them. The three francs of taxation, and the density of the population —the Chinese rightly believe—are the best minister *del foruento.* The trade of the interior, local production and consumption free from taxation, and as large as possible, their relations undisturbed by foreign occurrences, are the immediate results of this system.

Thirty years ago there was, so to speak, no navy in China ; what there was, consisted only of junks of different sizes, whose duty it was to protect the coasts and move troops from one province to another, by means of the rivers and streams flowing from one to the other. It was merely a defensive navy, and could not take the sea.

After the defeats sustained at different times China began to understand that these means were insufficient, and that, without departing from her defensive system she must be in a position to contend against well-equipped enemies.

Naval yards were constructed under the advice of Frenchmen, Englishmen, and Americans, and several steam war vessels were built, but latterly it has been found more economical to purchase any ships that may be required in Europe, than to keep up arsenals for the construction of two or three ships a year.

The navy, whether composed of junks or steam vessels, is a department of the war ministry.

China requires no navy for purposes of attack, because she has never desired to possess colonies. Until about two hundred years ago, the Chinese were forbidden to emigrate even to islands bordering on the continent, such as Chusan, and Hainan. There were fisheries on the islands, and the fishermen resided there during the season, but their families and homes always remained on the continent. The islands, so far as the Government were concerned, were merely strategic points on which it kept up flotillas or guard-boats.

I was a long time in discovering the reason of this prohibition. I was at first told that it was to avoid administrative expense, but the Chinese administer their own affairs with such ease that it was obvious the answer was intended to get rid of an importunate questioner. I was afterwards told that, according to popular belief, souls never leave the land they inhabited when living, so that to die in a country removed from the ancestral, was to run the risk of being for ever severed from the eternal family.

This explanation was more plausible, but not entirely satisfactory, as nothing would have been easier than for the Chinese to bring back the bodies, as they do now from San Francisco, and so compel the soul to return to its ancestral home; and besides, it is a matter of personal feeling and not of government.

I learned the truth when conversing, on the subject of *gen*, with some Chinese friends.

'Yes,' they said, 'whoever puts unknown space between himself and the country in which he was born, destroys the unity of humanity, immediately, and perhaps eternally. The emigrant alone in uncultivated countries says to himself, "This belongs to me," and is from that moment outside the pale of humanity. He builds barriers, ramparts and fortresses, and from being a stranger becomes an enemy. He forgets that the soil belongs to no one, and that man can only possess its use on condition of cultivating it himself. Large properties which can only be tilled on a large scale lead to serfdom, arrest and destroy the spread of the population.[1] And besides, when people cease to believe in the same principles, and their hearts no longer respond to each other, their mouths no longer use the same tongue. It is thus, sir, that so many peoples descended from a common source are now hostile to one another.'

While my friends were speaking I was recalling to my mind the history of European colonies, and I could not prevent myself from thinking of the injustice of which they have been the cause, and of the victims and

[1] There is a village consisting of thirty-four houses, Neuf-Moulins, on the road from Senlis to Montefontaine, now completely abandoned. The lands of the village have been restored to a former seignorial domain belonging to Madame C——, and have relapsed into prairie.

blood sacrificed to them. Nor, after despoiling others, have the conquerors even remained faithful to their mother country. Some, after existing for years under the yoke of their fatherland, severed themselves from her violently at last, laid down frontiers, established custom-houses, raised armies, and may at any moment be destroyed by the fleets which were their original protectors.

Others, flotsam and jetsam, strewed upon the continent unknown till yesterday, already regard each other with suspicion, and look forward to the time when the stronger can absorb the weaker.

'Our system of colonisation,' continued one of the literati, 'is quite different. We draw closer and closer to each other instead of separating. We do not lay claim to any land we do not occupy. We water the soil with our sweat, and we are one with it. It is thus by the gradual increase of population that the country has increased, and the *hundred families* have extended themselves little by little as far as the mountains of Thibet, the sands of the desert, and the sea. We conquered the land with the plough, not by arms, and we defend it with the same weapon. In short, as I might perhaps have said at first, we are not unhappy; our fields readily return us the labour we expend on them, and excepting persons of bad character we do not sacrifice a man or a sapèque to foreign colonies. Let those who like to run the risks of fortune in foreign countries go there at their own risk and peril. We do

not wish to do so, and we have nothing to expect from them.'

Such were the explanations given to me of the systematic absence of colonies.

Within the last century or two, however, public opinion seems to have relaxed a little from the severity of these principles.

The Chusan archipelago now contains more than 300,000 inhabitants, and the island of Hainan also is extensively populated, while Formosa contains a relatively large number of Chinese. Hainan and Chusan can no more be considered as colonies than Hyères, Mount St. Michael, and Corsica. Formosa is further from the continent, but if, after being induced to take possession of the island in order to destroy one of the most extensive refuges of Malay pirates, the Government has remained there, it is because the native population proved itself so inept for any civilisation that it was impossible to hand over the administration of the island to them.

On the continent also China has been compelled to take measures for her own safety. After having repulsed the inroads made at different times by the Tonkinese, the Annamites, the Coreans and others, she began by establishing military colonies in their midst, which initiated them into the ways of civilisation and a sedentary existence, and then, reserving to herself a by no means onerous suzerainty, permitted them again to govern themselves. She is now pursuing a similar

task in Turkestan and its neighbourhood on the north, and she may end by annexation if the people prefer it, as has previously occurred,[1] or by retreat, on proper guarantees of security being given.

At present her policy is confined to establishing military colonies of no more importance than those previously settled in Tonkin, and there is no reason to suppose that even in the most secret motives of her policy she has any intention of departing from her ordinary line of conduct or of creating a ministry of the colonies.[2]

I have spoken of the ministries usual in Europe, but non-existent in China, by their European names, I propose now to examine the relations between the actual ministries and the people.

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[1] In the seventeenth century the Tugurts, numbering nearly 1,200,000 persons, travelled several hundred leagues in order to settle as near to China as possible and obtain the protection of her laws.

[2] It may be worth while to call attention here to the fact that while many persons in Europe have despaired of ever bringing the African Arabs under our civilisation, the Chinese have succeeded in civilising not only the races in question, but many tribes of Tartars, originally as nomad and disdainful of agricultural labour as the still pastoral Tartars, and the Arabs, whom they resemble in more than one point. There is here a most interesting subject of study for Frenchmen.

III.

The first ministry is the personal, but it was originally instituted under a more significant title—the ministry of the population, the development of which was its special charge.

Under the Chow dynasty, when the Government chiefly consisted of the ministry of agriculture, the personal ministry was included in it. At that time the people did not possess an hereditary right to the lands given them to cultivate, and when under the direction of Government, the area allotted to each family produced more than sufficient for its wants, the ministry of population removed the inhabitants to a more distant spot, as is now done in Japan. The minister of population, with the assistance of special officials, also taught the practice of agriculture. Its special duty was thus the development of humanity, and instruction in cultivation.

It has lost much of its influence now, and its decline naturally dates from the period when the extensive development of population, equally spread over the surface of the land, became subject to merely natural laws of increase. The people then took the place of the ministry of population, which retains only the direction of the personal staff, the names and duties of which have been altered to suit the altered requirements of the times. The census, formerly

a part of the duties devolving upon it, have been since added to those of the finance ministry. Tradition and other causes have combined, however, to maintain the ministry of population in its former position as the first and most important of all. Of these causes the first is that it possesses the bestowal of all public offices, the rewards of talent and the main aspiration on the part of all the literati; and the second is that in the eyes of the people it is the court of reference from all officials, and the authority to which all complaints of their action should be made.

When speaking of the ministry of commerce, I said that, according to the Chinese, a people was best governed by itself, and this remark applies equally to the ministry of finance. We have in China a perfectly unique sight, a State richer than any, a land worth more than two thousand milliards of francs exclusive of the value of the property it contains, and a Government without finances.

The words, without finances, perhaps convey too much, but excepting the land tax, the revenue from the customs, salt monopoly, and mines, it has nothing to administer. There exists no public or floating debt, no savings-banks, no monopolies, no banks, no pensions to pay, merely a staff of treasurers-general, —that is the ministry of finance in China. It should more properly be called the ministry of accounts. The real financial administration is in the hands of

the people. The soil is the ledger and the savings-bank, and every field is a page. There can, in my opinion, be no stronger proof of real prosperity, and it is incontestable that a people possessing such a power of financial administration can be neither apathetic nor flighty.

A young diplomatist attached to one of the European legations in Pekin was, however, of a different opinion; he formed his judgment at a glance, immediately on his arrival.

A Government which could do nothing, because it possessed no finances, and a people kept back because the Government would not urge it forward, was in a poor state of civilisation. He set to work, and in a few days he presented to the Chinese ministry a long and learned memorandum, explanatory of the resources, the advantages, and the methods of state loans. He was politely thanked for his trouble, and nothing more was said, but one of the literati, with whom I had some conversation, was much astonished.

'I am not acquainted,' he remarked, 'with the social organisation of Europe, but state loans are impossible for us. We have no system of perpetual loans. Loans are made by private individuals to each other, sometimes without interest, and at a rate of 30 per cent. if the parties are strangers to each other, for a period of three years. At the end of that time the capital must be repaid if the borrower is able and

willing to do so. If it proves that he has acted in bad faith, he never finds another opportunity of borrowing. There is no other penalty. The laws against usury are very severe, and favourable to the debtor.

'The Government could not borrow under such conditions, and at so high an interest, nor could it provide for the interest, since taxation is fixed; nor could it find lenders—there are no persons living on their means. Every man uses his own capital, and obtains from it a profit, larger than any that the State could afford to pay him. If heavy loans are usual in the West, it is evident that land and savings are concentrated in the hands of a small number of people incapable of using them themselves. This reflection, I confess, suggests to me a serious doubt whether justice is the law of the West. I have replied as well as I am able to the question you put to me, and perhaps you will allow me to say no more.'

Here, again, in the relations existing between the people and the finances of Government, the Chinese find a justification of their theories as to the influence of *gen* on the development of humanity: on the one hand a rich government, a concentrated property, and a sparse population; on the other a poor government, property divided in many hands, and a dense population. A fact which appears to confirm the judgment of the gentleman I have quoted, is that, urged on by exceptional necessity, and guided to issue loans by

European influence, the Chinese Government have been compelled to issue them in Europe. In 1868, if I remember correctly, there were two loans amounting in all to seventy or eighty millions of francs.

The ministry of rites has several duties. It represents, first, what may be termed the spiritual power of civilisation, which it at one time possessed in its entirety, though deprived of it in some measure by the progress of civilisation itself. It is charged with the care of the Temples of Heaven, Earth, Thunder or Electricity and Light, as well as those sacred to the memory of Confucius, and it directs and watches over the necessary sacred functions. It is not concerned with ancestral worship, which is simply the individual application of doctrines which the sacred functions are intended to call to mind, and which has, after universal observance for millions of years, become so integral a part of the national life that it is sufficiently maintained by the promise it has always fulfilled, and the hope it has never deceived. The development of the population, and the other results brought about by its teaching, have given it a position which it would not be possible to strengthen. The ministry of rites, therefore, has no direct action upon the religious and superstitious beliefs of the people, without which it would be compelled to change its name and denote itself the ministry of public worship. It confines itself to recalling from time to time, and preserving in their purity, the philosophic principles,

the efficacy of which has been demonstrated during forty centuries, and with this end it has instituted, from the most remote antiquity, fortnightly instructions addressed to the people by means of the mandarins or delegated literati.

I have mentioned elsewhere the principal characteristic of all these instructions—'mistrust religions.'

Old age is in China the object of a kind of worship, which is one of the principal duties of the ministry of rites. Men above the age of seventy years receive public and official honours, and rich and poor are invited by the officials of their districts to grand banquets, at which the latter themselves serve them. Old men of upwards of eighty years of age are honoured by the highest officials, who seize the occasion to reward them in some special manner for any services rendered by them, however humble the individual.

About twenty years ago a Christian doctor was living in a town in Kwei-Chow who had acquired a great reputation for infant maladies. He had saved the lives of many children, including one belonging to the governor of the town. He invariably refused all fees, even that offered him by the governor. The latter, therefore, having ascertained the age of the doctor, went himself, accompanied by his usual escort, to his shop on the occasion of the feast of old age, and bowing before him, handed him an inscription setting

forth his own thanks and those of the country, and invited him to a banquet to take place a fortnight later. Public charity is a department of the ministry of rites, and to it belongs the duty of apportioning the amount of assistance to be granted to districts suffering from natural plagues, in the shape of remission of taxation, and loans of grain or money.

The reserve granaries and charitable establishments founded and maintained by Government are also administered under the supervision of the ministry of rites, which is also charged with the promulgation and execution of laws, decrees, and regulations, which by reason of their special or general character might not be understood or observed by the public. I have already mentioned that the relations of China with foreign nations are part of its duties.

There is nothing to be said of the war ministry that cannot be readily divined by every one. In a country in which civilisation is founded upon the development of humanity and on increase of population—that is, on fraternity and a solidarity of fact, not of words,—among a people from amidst whom the very idea of war, as an institution, has so entirely disappeared, that nothing is more odious to them than its recollection, or the sight of anything that may recall it—a war ministry must be either a violent, formal, and constant contradiction of their civilisation, or a simple ministry of defence; and it is to the latter that the *rôle* of the Chinese army is confined. It

should be added that the troops are always quartered outside the towns, and are only permitted to enter them upon requisition of the civil authorities. The army, however, is doubtless insufficient from this point of view, and it may be asked if this inferiority is inherent to Chinese civilisation.

I should have something to say on this point, but I prefer to reserve my observations for a critical examination of Chinese civilisation, which I intend to publish separately.

It is even easier to conceive the duties of the minister of justice than of the minister of war; the explanation already given of the family organisation and the extent of its judiciary power will show clearly enough how the jurisdiction of Government must be limited to exceptional cases. It is an appellate and criminal jurisdiction, limited to crimes deserving the punishment of death, which cannot be awarded by the family, and is also the natural civil and criminal jurisdiction over those isolated individuals whom accident or expulsion has placed outside their family circle.

The extent of this work does not allow of my entering into as detailed an account as the subject demands. I may, however, be permitted to give a brief notice of it.

There is no public ministry with the State tribunals, nor lawyers, except in cases of murder. The plaintiff and defendant state the facts of their cases themselves, or cause them to be explained by others as shortly as

possible, and the magistrate, assisted by two assessors, pronounces an equitable judgment. The decisions are public, and the audience is occasionally consulted. Whatever the nature of the case before him, the magistrate invariably begins by asking if it has been adjudicated upon by the family, and he takes the domestic verdict into consideration.

The penal code of China contains only three punishments: death, with torture added, according to the case—that is, by poison or suicide, strangulation or decapitation,—personal punishment, and deportation. There is no imprisonment, except that, as, no matter how strong the evidence may be, the confession of the guilty person is indispensable before sentence of death can be pronounced—and it sometimes occurs that this confession is refused,—in order not to permit a criminal to return to freedom, he is remanded to prison until he confesses.

This is, however, illegal, and the grave, though possibly accidental, consequences of this procedure, though perhaps devised in the favour of the accused, may be easily imagined.

The code is very severe. A third conviction for theft, or theft of a sum amounting to 200 francs (£8), rape, adultery, and murder, are punished with death, without extenuating circumstances. An accessory is punished with the same rigour as the principal.

Political crimes are considered as the gravest of all; in so much as they are attempts against the unity of

society, are punished with death, often of a cruel kind. Minor offences of this nature are punished with exile or deportation to the districts of Illi.[1]

All death sentences must receive the sanction of the Emperor, who observes a fast of three days before examining them.

The law, as has been stated, allows no extenuating circumstances, though in cases of manslaughter, or even sometimes of murder without malice or forethought, a composition may be paid.

There is another exception, the reason of which I have never been able to understand. In certain circumstances, and when there has been no murder, the law allows the convicted felon to procure a substitute. The consent of the prosecutor, and, of course, of the substitute, must be previously obtained; but there is little difficulty in finding the latter. The family of the condemned person addresses itself to one of the hundred criminals of whom I have spoken, and offers him the means of rehabilitating himself with his family whom he has dishonoured, ruined, and reduced to the greatest misery. He accepts the offer. Such a course is, however, but seldom permitted. While in Pekin I nearly witnessed the execution of a superior officer of the army, who, convicted of the rape of a child, had been unable to procure a substitute, in spite of the

[1] Illi is a country on the north-west of China, the soil of which, as it consists of a very deep valley, is of proverbial fertility. The climate is very mild, and the melons of Illi are celebrated everywhere.

large sums he offered, his family not having consented to the composition.

The condemned person is invariably compelled to exile himself.

Another curiosity of the Chinese criminal code is legal suicide.

According to Seneca, death should not only be courageously awaited, it should even be anticipated.

Voluntary death, said he, enables the most isolated, feeble and weak individual to face the Master of the world. The thought that he can always escape inspires him with courage to resist unlimited power, and he is saved from feeling himself a slave by the thought that he can always die. In China there is no question of escaping tyranny, but it may happen, as with us, that a man may unsuccessfully exhaust all legitimate means of obtaining justice, or even that accused of a crime, he may be unable to prove his innocence, and then it is that despair, the knowledge of his right and the law, give the unhappy man a last resource of proving himself in the right, against the strongest evidence. He may affirm the truth of his statements by death before the door of his accuser or persecutor; the latter will then be tried as guilty of murder.

A Chinaman had cleared and cultivated a piece of land, forming part of a property belonging to the Bishop of Pekin. The crops were plentiful, and the converts consequently desired to recover the land. But, according to law, a peasant is guaranteed the usufruct

of the land. The converts therefore, with the intention of disgusting him with his bargain, played him all kinds of tricks, and finally gathered in his crops by night. The peasant laid a complaint, but the suit, owing to the prestige possessed by the bishop in 1862, was so prolonged, that at last, desperate and weary of the struggle, the peasant cut his throat before the door of one of the converts. This took place in a village of Mongolia, the far side of the Great Wall. I arrived there the day the converts were arrested.

Another story is that of a man laden with sapèques, who, when crossing a bridge, met a robber who took his money and ran away. The aggrieved one cried out, 'If you do not bring back my money I will drown myself!' The robber brought back the money.

Whatever reflections the severity and strangeness of Chinese law may occasion, it must not be forgotten that in spite of its rigour the number of death sentences are very small in ordinary times. In provinces containing from 25,000,000 to 30,000,000 inhabitants, the death sentences do not average more than twelve to fourteen a year, and there are others containing as large a number of inhabitants in which none have been pronounced for several years. The fact should not be lost sight of, that the criminals brought as a rule before the official tribunals are of the worst type, and only such as have been already driven out of their families, after pardon has been granted them over and over again. In other countries a criminal driven out of society after

a first conviction is often driven by necessity to the commission of another offence, but this is not the case in China.

The real tribunals of the country are the domestic ones, and the real justice the advice, admonitions and punishments which keep in the ranks of humanity the wandering souls whom pitiless right would drive forth for ever, and the family justice, which even while punishing a culprit with the utmost rigour, always leaves the door open to repentance and rehabilitation. That is the justice to be considered.

A very natural inquiry would be as to what are the rules of these tribunals; and—since the civil law of China consists merely of a few articles indispensable to formulate and assure the general principles of society, the code being merely penal—what is the law by which the domestic magistrates are inspired and supported? What sanction do their judgments possess, and what force exists to constrain the condemned person to submit himself to them? There is but one reply to both questions. The law which inspires the judge is the law inherent to every man, and the force which compels the guilty person to submit himself to his decrees, is that sentiment of justice which the guilty cannot long fail to recognise.

I have previously spoken of the respect in which the family councils and their decisions are held. Something more, however, in no way difficult of explanation, is required. The public magistrates listen, form their

judgment, and condemn, but the domestic magistrates clear up the matter before tendering their judgment. The guilty are convicted and their dormant consciences awakened before sentence is passed, and no force is required. I have myself seen condemned persons tender their legs to be fettered.

No doubt this presupposes an idea of justice carried to an extraordinary pitch, but there is nothing in it which need astonish those of us who are acquainted with Chinese institutions and who remember their customs relative to domestic justice. Someone has remarked that each man is the sum of the race, and the reader who acknowledges the hereditary transmission of certain faculties can easily imagine the accumulation produced in every Chinese as the result of past centuries.

The Chinese, who claim to possess a highly developed feeling of justice, explain it in a different way, and this belief is after all no more mystical than the explanation founded upon atavism. The reader can take his choice.

'When a child is born, it is a man, and yet only a child is visible. As he grows up, not only do his arms and legs develope but also his ideas; and it is the same with humanity as a whole. No man can ever see it in its entirety, but it nevertheless exists, and is an entity in many members. All ideas are contained in humanity, and there are none without, but their manifestation takes place in proportion to her growth.'

The future of humanity, of Man (Y-gen) is desirable, and every effort should be made towards it, for it is the future of more and more complete justice. In a word, the denser the population the greater the development of the idea of justice. These are the theories of the Chinese, and if they are correct, we must acknowledge that no people has better reasons for believing herself in possession of justice, and consequently of dispensing with a ministry charged with its application and administration. We may quit here the question of atavism and Chinese doctrine. The fact remains that a people must possess a singularly high ideal of justice among whom a culprit surrenders himself to punishment without necessitating the employment of police or any public force, and among whom an accused does not hesitate before suicide as a presumption in favour of the justice of his cause. There is another consideration. Chinese justice is very simple, and concerns itself only with infractions of the essential principles of the conservation of human unity. 'Honour your father and mother; commit no murder, nor theft nor perjury, nor covet your neighbour's wife nor his land.'

Such is the natural law of China, and it perhaps explains why the public law is severe; the latter does not concern itself with private, artificial or conventional arrangements.

It does not suffice the Chinese that the idea of justice should be manifest in the relations of men to

each other; it must pervade all their works, and reign everywhere, on plants, animals and on earth, or matter. This is the mission of 'Man, Y-gen,' through whom Heaven acts and transforms, its mediator with the physical world. The more powerful humanity is, or rather the more numerous, men, its method of action, are, the easier it is to carry out this mission. What remains for me to say about the ministry of public works will be a last illustration.

What this ministry was, or rather what was the action of Government, when the canal system, one of the principal glories of China, was created, or when at a less remote period the Great Wall was built, are sufficiently explained by the immensity of these works and the date of their execution. It is clear that the Government, which could then dispose at pleasure of the still sparse populations, transported them and collected them in the neighbourhood of the places where the works were being carried out.

Nothing but collective and simultaneous effort can explain the gigantic results of canals extending for several thousand leagues, and lakes of a circumference of from thirty-five to seventy leagues.

For several thousand years past the same remark applies to the public works as to the laws of China: they are complete and no longer remain to be done. The Government confines itself to their care. I do not say it acquits itself well of this duty, but it has no other.

Public works are executed according to the degree of interest of each in them, by provinces, departments or communes, by means of subscriptions, partly voluntary, and partly imposed by the elected councils according to the wealth of the inhabitants, the poorer people being relieved from all contributions.

It is not uncommon for some of these public works, such as bridges, or roads, to be built at the cost of a few rich people, who for all reward are content with the inscription of their names on one of the stones.

The most astonishing works, however, are those carried out daily by private enterprise. Considered as a whole, nothing previously executed can be compared with them, while they would appal the boldest engineers and capitalists. What, for example, would be the reply of the latter to a proposal to level all the mountains? And yet this is done daily by private individuals, without a State guarantee or official aid. And the reason is very simple, another effect of *gen*. Under the effects of a population, growing denser and denser, living under just laws, property is so subdivided, that works, which with a scattered population would be impossible, or would at all events require an enormous concentration of force, when subdivided, are comparatively easily carried out by private individuals in their spare time. No drop of water reaches the plains without having been twenty times stopped on the side of the mountains; and all the terraces, which form regular flights of steps from the summit to the base,

are the work of the peasants. The gutters of our towns are not so close together as those which water the rice fields, and they are the work of the owners themselves.

How often have I felt myself filled with admiration when watching them executing, almost as if in play, works which would be impossible elsewhere!

How often, when watching them building, stone by stone, buttresses intended to render the mountain land as fertile as that of the valleys, or gathering rice or corn from crevices where previously birds of prey built their nests, have I cried to myself, 'Ah, the fine fellows!' I was touched by what they were doing, I was grateful to them; and I triumphed with them over the obstacles they had conquered!

The fact which always seemed the most wonderful to me, the fact of which these victories were after all only the striking proof, was the progressive substitution of individual for collective action in all the works of civilisation, from the simplest to the most complex, from mental to material.

The individual freed from the slavery of collectivity, independent, and free in unity, thanks to that unity, is the salient fact apparent from the study of the relations between the people, State, and Government in China, and appears to me to justify the theories prevalent there.

PART V.

THE OUANG-MING-TSE FAMILY.

I.

Ouang-Mo-Khi is a group of seven or eight hundred houses, situated between two of the hills forming the mountains of Yang-Ping, fourteen leagues to the west of Fou-Cheou in the province of Fokien. The country is beautiful, and the air healthy, while the heat is much less in summer than at Fou-Cheou. Excepting a hundred or a hundred and fifty tradesmen and merchants, collected upon the banks of the Ta-Chouei-Khi, which runs through the bottom of the valley, the inhabitants have scattered their cottages in all parts, leaving between them almost equal spaces occupied by fields and gardens. The river, with its numerous bridges, is covered with boats of different sizes travelling between the numerous centres of population, some of them towns of considerable importance, which it traverses. The hills are cultivated and watered almost to the summit by canals, which obtain their water from the Ta-Chouei-Khi. The water of these

canals, which run along the sides of the slopes at about a third of their height, is raised by water-wheels worked by men and buffaloes into another at a higher level, and thence in the same manner into a third, fourth, and fifth, spreading freshness and life on all sides before returning to its bed.

When the rice is ripe, and the irrigation season consequently over, such labour is no longer necessary, the requirements of the other crops being sufficiently supplied by the rain and rivulets, the water from which is collected in properly constructed reservoirs. Surveyed from above, these canals resemble belts of silver. The peasants, compelled, as it were, to mould the shape of their farms according to the windings of the water and the bend of the hills, have given them the most varied and unexpected forms, some almost hanging on the sides of the hills, where they are held by dry stone walls, in the interstices of which large lianes have taken root, resembling gigantic holy-water basins, advanced bastions, or balconies full of verdure.

Rice, tea, cotton, sugar and oranges are the principal products of the country, but there are others also which add considerably to its wealth—such as hemp from a palm whose large branches extend over six or eight metres of land;[1] oil extracted from the seeds of a tree whose knotted trunk, twisted branches, and rusty leaves give it a most miserable appearance;[2] tallow

[1] Chamœrops excelsa.

[2] Dryandra cordata.

yielded by a tree resembling in the distance a birch or poplar;[1] and the bamboo, probably the most useful of all shrubs, certainly the most useful where stems eight or ten metres in height wave their plumes to the slightest breeze. There are also a few groups of banana trees, five or six feet in height, but the fruit is seldom eatable, and the trees seem merely intended to contribute to the general ornamentation of the country.

The hills of Ouang-Mo-Khi are not entirely cultivated. There are heights which no man has yet reached, and rocky slopes not yet brought into submission to his hand. Nature has undertaken the duty of their decoration, and covers them in the spring, after the month of February, with the most beautiful vestments. Purple, red, or golden azaleas, white gardenias, blue clematis, primroses, caper-trees, and camelias cover all the slopes.

Not an inch of soil is forgotten, there is not a gap in the whole of this splendid mantle.

The country is here and there broken by small groups of trees, from which arise, at break of day, noon, and sunset, the silver notes which recall to the mind of the traveller the Angelus of Christian countries. They are the bells of the twelve Buddhist pagodas, whose triple roofs, with their yellow enamelled tiles and spurred angles, are plainly visible against the pure blue of the sky.

[1] Stillingia sebifera.

These bells alone break the profound stillness, untroubled by other sound than the songs of the birds, and the echoes of the voices of labourers in the fields. These sounds, songs, silence, perfume and colours, unite to render this part of the world a perfect paradise. There are no wheels grinding over a stony pavement, no sounds of hammers, nor black and foul smoke from chimneys. The eye and ear, all the senses in fact, undisturbed by any strange and discordant noise, acquire an unheard-of subtilty. The grass can almost be heard to grow, and, to quote an expression of a Chinese poet, almost the sound made upon the ground by the shadow of the leaves stirred by the wind. Nowhere is life so deeply felt, nor man and nature more closely united.

The inhabitants of Fou-Cheou, and of the towns within a circuit of thirty miles, delight in this spot, and visit it every summer with their families.

There are several tents attached to each pagoda, which can always be obtained by an early application. People come even from Ning-Po and Shanghai, by the canals which run up to the foot of the mountains.

The family Ouang-Ming-Tse reside here, whose acquaintance I made as follows. It was the end of March, and the first tea crop had just been gathered. Two men were hoeing and manuring the roots of the shrubs in a field. I watched them, seated under a palm tree, near some clothes they had laid there, and an enormous earthen teapot covered with plaited

straw, from which they refreshed themselves from time to time. The eldest addressed me: 'Your younger brother dares not offer you this poor drink.'

'Thanks, elder brother; I was thirsty just now, but I have just eaten an orange, and I wish to keep the taste of it.'

'Oh, the taste of tea does not spoil that of an orange; I do not speak of such as this, it is not very good. I should like you to try another. A-Pé-A, A-Pé-A, go to the house and bring some tea of the new crop.'

The house was close by. A-Pé-A soon returned with a tray, some cups, a kettle of hot water, a small brazier, a box of tea, and a stand on which he placed them. While the water was boiling, my interlocutor opened the box, and took out some leaves which he put in each of the cups. He filled them with water, and covering them with their saucers he said, 'It is not very dry yet, but it will only be better for that.' Then, bowing to me, he carried the cup to his lips, gently putting the saucer on one side, and slowly drinking the contents.

I followed his example; it was exquisite. The clear liquor, as yellow as pale gold, and as fragrant as the tea-flower, was pleasing to the eye and left a soft and delicious flavour on the palate. He saw that I liked it. 'Is it not good, sir?'

'Yes, my elder brother, it is; the flavour of an orange is coarse compared to this!' 'One of our

poets likens the tea-flower to the cheek of a young girl.'

I confessed I had never thought of such a simile, though the idea seemed to me a good one. 'But,' said I, 'do you gather much tea like this?' 'Alas! no, sir,' replied he; 'it is impossible; it is gathered scarcely open; a *meou*[1] scarcely produces one pound. It is not much, but all depends on the price at which it is sold; the merchants purchase it at ten francs (8*s.* 4*d*) per pound. It is not much, but it is an early gathering, and does not keep the others back much.' 'Is your crop sold yet?' 'No, sir, it is not ready; we shall take it to market in a few days, except what we keep for the friends who come to visit us.' 'Will you sell me a pound of that destined for market?' 'Certainly, sir; my elder brother resides, I think, in the pagoda below?' 'Yes; but may I ask how you became aware of the fact? I only arrived in the country the day before yesterday.' 'Oh, sir, everything is quickly known in our little villages, and besides, you are European; it is commonly believed you came to buy tea.'

'No, I have come only to rest a little while in your beautiful country, and I hope often to have the pleasure of seeing you.' 'I was going to ask my elder brother's permission to visit him.' I gave it eagerly, and we parted. At the end of a week, my interpreter brought me a large red visiting card,

[1] The fifteenth part of a hectare.

bearing in very small characters the name of Ouang-Ming-Tse, and asked me to fix a time for seeing him. I said I would see him at once, and an hour afterwards the arrival of two men was announced to me. I gave orders to admit them, and made a few steps towards them. One, about sixty years of age, was a perfect stranger to me; in the other, who seemed about forty years old, I had no difficulty in recognising my peasant friend in spite of his dress of ceremony. Both wore a long dress of blue cotton, an overcoat of violet silk, and a felt hat with the sides much turned up. After the usual greetings, I led them to a canopy where I asked them to seat themselves, assigning the place of honour to the elder man. They declined, and I was obliged to confine myself to an offer of two chairs, taking a third myself at a little distance from the places they had declined. After another greeting, we began to talk. 'I did not wish,' said the older man, 'to leave to my son alone the honour of bringing you the tea he had promised you, and I hoped you would pardon me for having come.' I assured him I was delighted. 'When my son, Po-Y, made you the promise he was not aware that our crop had been sold the same morning, so that we can only offer you some of the tea we keep for our friends,' he added timidly. I thanked him heartily for a present so delicately offered, and the conversation took its ordinary turn. I complimented him upon the beauty of his country, and he bowed. 'May I ask your happy age?' 'I

am thirty-six.' 'I should have thought you double that,'[1] he replied, and I bowed in my turn. 'And you, my elder brother, what is the number of your years?' 'I am only sixty-two.' 'It would be difficult to assign you double that age,' I answered smiling, 'but you appear much older.'

He bowed again, and asked, 'What is your honourable name?'

'Si is my humble name.'

'And you are also from Si?'[2]

'You have guessed it, Ouang Ming-Tse,' I answered, laughing at his pun. He laughed also.

'Oh, that was not difficult, Si-Lao-Ye.[3] But what is your native country?'

'France,' I replied, and both men bowed.

'And your parents, Si-Lao-Ye, are they well?'

'They are dead, Ouang-Sien-Sen.'[4]

'We are very sorry for you, Si-Lao-Ye; no doubt that is why you have left your home.'

'It is so, Ouang-Sien-Sen; but may I ask if you, more fortunate than I, still possess your parents?'

'My father died three years ago, but, thanks to God, I still possess my mother; she is ninety-two years old and in good health.'

[1] A great compliment in China, where they have a proverb, 'Y mo jo sin, fei mo jo hou.' The translation of which is: 'In a garment the valuable part is novelty; in a man, a great age.'

[2] Si, the first syllable of my name in French, became my Chinese name, and signifies West.

[3] Venerable Si. [4] Mr. Ouang.

'Have you a numerous family, Ouang-Ming-Tse?'

'I have three daughters older than Po-Y, and a fourth younger; they are married, and do not live in our village. I have a son still younger, also married, whose interests are of course separated from ours, but who lives near our house. He has already six children.' I congratulated them both. The servant here brought some tea, which he placed upon stools put between the chairs, with cigars and French liqueurs. The latter they liked well enough, but they soon laid aside their cigars, which seemed too strong.

We then conversed of France, its customs, industries, and railways, and Po-Y, who had not previously opened his mouth, never tired of asking questions. At last they rose and took leave, first making me promise to visit them the following day. On my doing so, I was met by the men, who led me to a room where the whole family, standing in order of their height, awaited me. I was compelled against my will to seat myself in the place of honour. Ouang-Ming-Tse was on my right, and Po-Y introduced the others to me—his mother, Ouan-Lay-Lay (Mrs. Ouang), and his wife, Po-Ta-Niang (Mrs. Po), who made a deep curtsey, lowering their clasped hands to the floor, and raising them to their chin; his eldest son, A-Pé, a strong youth of eighteen years old; and his eldest daughter, Po-Kouei-Nin (Miss Po-Y), a modest and charming child of sixteen, both of whom made the *kotou*.[1] A boy of

[1] The kotou is the most respectful of Chinese salutations.

fifteen did the same, and then two little girls of twelve and ten years, and a little one of three and a half, whom they all watched smilingly as he gravely approached me, knelt, lowered his head to the earth, and rose very proud of having accomplished the ceremony of grown-up people. I went up to the mother and wife of Po-Y, and returned their salutation, then with a friendly gesture to the children I went back to my place. I noticed the assemblage was incomplete, and asked for the grandmother, Po-Sien-Sen, expressing a hope she was not unwell.

'No, Si-Lao-Ye, but she cannot stand long, and is late; here she comes.'

In fact the good old lady arrived as he spoke, assisted by the second son of Ouang-Ming-Tse, who had come to see me, bent with age and leaning upon a stick. I hastened to offer her the deepest salutation, which she returned with a kindly look, being unable to bow. She was very old, her face was wrinkled, her hands trembled, and her head shook. Her eyes, in spite of the melancholy expression common to old people, were still bright; her scant grey hairs were ornamented with the same flowers as those on the heads of her grand-daughters, and her carriage was full of dignity. 'Sit down, sir,' she said, 'and be welcome.'

All resumed their seats. At a sign from me my servant brought a large box whence he took a doll, some images, packets of needles, of red candles, ribbons, a German wig and a stereoscope. The variety suited

all tastes, and everyone was delighted. 'Grandmother, let us do away with all ceremonial and etiquette, the gentleman does not seem to mind.'

The gentleman, in fact, did not; he resumed his youth and, stepping down from his throne,[1] proceeded to explain the working of the stereoscope. There is no end to the questions and thanks: 'Oh, Si-Lao-Ye! Oh, Si-Lao-Ye!' The little one is in ecstasy—the doll snores; the young girls unroll their ribbons; but the wonder of all is the stereoscope. The streets and squares of Europe fill them with admiration, and they are simply stupefied with astonishment at the five-storied houses. They cannot understand people being obliged to mount so high, nor that they can be compelled thus to live one above another. The door, however, opens, and a table loaded with a complete dinner is brought in. 'Ah, Ouang-Sien-Sen, that is more than our bargain; I breakfasted only two hours ago.'

'I beg you, Si-Lao-Ye, to make an effort.'

The grandmother, Ouang-Lao-Po,[2] Ouang-Lay-Lay, and the children have disappeared; only we four men remain. This in no way astonished me, and I raised no question, for I knew it is not customary for women to eat with men, at least when strangers are present. The wife of Po-Y and their son alone remained to

[1] The canopy, or seat of honour, is often placed on a small dais, raised a step or two above the floor.

[2] The venerable dame Ouang.

serve us. I found my servant had brought my spoon, fork and knife. The meal was simple but good, by no means the solemn, ostentatious meal of rich people or mandarins, but the common food of feast days among peasants. Fish in a kind of broth of exquisite flavour was in the middle of the table and took the place of soup, flanked on either side by ducks and fowls, while at the four corners were dishes of pork and mutton cut in small pieces, and a dish of beans.

In the intermediate spaces and round the table were a profusion of salt and sweet delicacies which are eaten before and after meals. I noticed mushrooms, prawns, sea-weed, ginger, preserved citron, lobus[1] cheese (made of pease).

Each person has a plate and a bowl of rice instead of bread. The dinner was really good, and all honour was done to it. After the dishes were finished with, the young girls brought oranges, dried fruits, sweets, cakes, wine, and liqueurs for dessert. The wine made me wince; it is made of rice and served hot; it has an unpleasant smell. The liqueurs are more to my taste; one of them much resembled curaçoa.

We finished our meal at last. In spite of its simplicity it occupied two hours, and, with the conversation which followed, it was nearly sunset when I took leave of my friends.

During the six weeks which I passed at Ouang-Mo-Khi, I did not fail to see them daily, either in

[1] The floral stem of a kind of reed.

their house or working in their fields, and I frequently saw them in after years, when I occasionally visited Ouang-Mo-Khi to escape the heat of summer. I may therefore say that I was to a certain extent a witness of their life, their labours, and pleasures, and what of their history I did not learn from my own observation I ascertained from their friendly replies to my questions. The whole was interesting to me, and I have inserted it in the following pages in the hope it may prove interesting to my reader.

II.

The history of the Ouang-Ming-Tse is a long one, beginning with that of the canton 800 years ago, and every one almost is acquainted with the principal episodes. They are always recalled to mind at the great anniversaries when the genealogies are read, which trace all the inhabitants to the one couple to whom the colonisation of the country is due. One Ouang, 800 years ago, under the reign of the Emperor Yuen-Fong of the dynasty of the Joug-du-Nord, of the Cha country, came one day to the valley, and being pleased with it, settled there. The Ta-Chouei-Khi river was at that time scarcely invented; there is every ground for believing that the river existed and ran in the same place, but its bed was partly underground, and it was unnamed.

It was lying inert and would have been much astonished to know that it would leave its bed one day to ascend the mountains, and mingle in the sports and labours of men. Shrubs and trees grew hither and thither without order, and served only as shelter to wild beasts. The mountains were bare, and exposed their fleshless bones to the skies. All was chaos; man in the person of Ouang took pity, and all was changed. He called the river 'The Great Water of the Valley,' opened up its channel so as to carry off the floods, and the river became his servant. He took a piece of land, cleared it and give it his surname. 'Let this,' said he, 'be known henceforward as the Land of Ouang.' It was his second wife, whom he loved with all his strength, so that if the first bore him children, the second produced an abundance of all that was necessary for their wants.

When his daughters were grown up they were asked in marriage by the people of Yué, Ou-si, and Gao-Tsong, living beyond the mountains.

When his sons were of age he assigned them a field on which to build a house, and sent them to seek wives among the same people. In time he gathered around him sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons, who were distinguished among themselves by the addition of a Christian name to that of their father. Thus arose the families of Ouang-Ti-Koué, Ouang-Po-Sen, Ouang-Hou-Tsang, and others.

Thus the valley was peopled and cultivated, and

thus the mountains celebrate the glory of Ouang and the earth resounds with his name. The valley, measuring scarcely 1200 hectares, now contains at least 10,000 inhabitants, almost all descended in the male line from the same couple. 10,000 inhabitants scattered over 1200 hectares is an animated picture, and can hardly be termed a rural district. It is certainly not rural, as in France, with fields extending as far as the eye can reach, and villages separated from each other by interminable spaces, a country without resources and amusements, where death from ennui follows a residence in winter. Nor is it town life, with its noise, its feverish and often useless agitation, its luxury and misery.

Ouang-Mo-Khi has all the charms of the first and the advantages of the latter. Let the reader imagine the coast from Bellevue to Chaville, substituting for the pretentious and luxurious villas modest peasants' cottages of one storey, very clean, white or grey, covered with red or blue tiles, more regularly spaced than between Bellevue and Chaville, and he will have a sufficiently exact idea of Ouang-Mo-Khi. There are numerous schools, almost one for every fifteen houses. The Buddhist temples contain several libraries, not including those placed at the disposal of all by the generosity of certain families, and kept in buildings consecrated to ancestors and their archives. The Buddhist temples in each of the ten quarters of Ouang-Mo-Khi contain a building of a peculiar kind

which Europeans also call a pagoda, but which has other uses than those of public worship. It is a large court enclosed by four walls of twenty to twenty-five feet in height. The interior contains a gallery constructed against the sides of the wall, resting on a frame of masonry, about five feet from the ground, covered with a roof supported by columns. On the fourth side is another frame like one at a theatre, lower and larger, also covered with a roof, the angles and edges of which are ornamented with female figures in burned clay, with openings on the right and left giving access to the court, which is open to the sky. Such as it is, this building serves all purposes. Three times a week it is used in the morning as a market, as a club in the middle of the day; it is in it that feasts are organised, and from it depart the funeral processions and the processions of the different guilds. It is also used as a theatre by the travelling troupes which visit the country, and as a caravanserai by travellers who do not wish to go to the inn.

The central pagoda of Ouang-Mo-Khi is naturally larger and finer than the others. The roof tiles are enamelled in green, and the walls of the inside are covered with porcelain plaques, ornamented with engravings.

There are very few towns in Europe better provided than Ouang-Mo-Khi with all that is pleasing to the eye and satisfying to the mind, but I do not wish to conceal the reality, and I admit that everything in the

pretty village is not beyond criticism. There is more than one objection looking at it from a close neighbourhood. The most serious is the existence of deep pits, full of liquid manure, at the end of the paths. Europeans who come to shoot at Ouang-Mo-Khi complain that there, as elsewhere, there is nothing to give notice of these accursed gins. It is not that there are offensive emanations from them, but they are generally so closely covered with large leaves, that in the excitement consequent on the pursuit of game, it is easy to fall into them.

Those to whom this lamentable accident has happened, do not, as a rule, make a boast of it, but they never forgive China for their mishap, and when a traveller is heard grumbling at his neighbourhood, it may generally be assumed that he has fallen into one of these pits.

III.

At what period of the history of Ouang-Mo-Khi did the family of Ouang-Ming-Tse begin to distinguish itself from others, and what was its connection with the founder of the commune? This question can be easily settled by consulting the genealogical lists and family annals. There exists no surer or more precise information than that gathered from such a source, which is never questioned.

The most severe judicial inquiry could find nothing to find fault with. It would be impossible to falsify a civil document known to all the neighbours. And the family books are controlled by those of the family from which it takes its rise. And as the supposition of a falsification of this kind is inadmissible, a simple declaration is sufficient. We may then be content with the statement of Ouang-Ming-Tse :—

'My father,' said he, 'was the fourth child of fourteen; his elders were two brothers and a sister. The first and third helped their parents, were peasants like them, and never left the house. The second studied for a mandarin, and was sufficiently successful to become governor of the district. The sister married when my father was fifteen years old. At that time my grandfather was far from rich; he tilled about fifteen *mous*, of which only seven or eight belonged to him. I am speaking of eighty or ninety years ago, and at that time fifteen *mous* did not bring in as much as now. The canals, you see, were not all cut, and the valley was less populated. Cultivation was more difficult and brought in less. When the number of children was found to be on the increase, it was decided that the boys should learn trades, and go to the town to endeavour to add to the common weal. My father was the one to begin. He had six brothers and sisters younger than himself, and chose the trade of a carpenter. His apprentice fees were paid for three years, and his wants provided for until he was

able to maintain himself. He was soon, however, able to save something to bring home to the fortnightly meetings. Three other sons followed his example, and my father increased the size of his field with their savings, pushing back the boundaries, and as soon as he could give employment to one of them, he recalled him. Only one, the youngest, remained at Fou-Cheou, and became one of the first merchants in the town. He never fails to come to our anniversaries, and when he gives up his business to two of his sons, as he soon will do, he will return here. He bought a large piece of land, a long time ago, which is cultivated by his eldest son, on which he has built his tomb.

'The pagoda used as a club and exchange nearest to us, was built at his expense, and he pays half the expenses of one of the schools of our quarter. It is almost as if he had never left the country. But I am telling you about my uncle, and we were speaking of my grandfather. I have shown you how he managed to marry his daughters, because it is a folly to say that daughters can be settled for nothing; they cannot be allowed to leave home empty-handed. He was also able to leave each of his boys ten or twelve meous. Thus my father began his life. And now, Si-Lao-Yé, if you wish to learn the history of my great-grandfather, and his father, I will tell it you, but excepting a few details of no importance, it is almost the same as what I have just narrated.

'I must, however, tell you of some of our ancestors who have done honour to our family. There was one who became receiver-general of finances, to whose liberality is owing the fifth canal of the left bank of the Ta-Chouei-Khi. I will show you his tomb in our family cemetery; it was built for him by the inhabitants of the village. Another attained the grade of licentiate of the first degree, and become rector in the province of Hou-Pé. One of the bridges over the river was built at his cost, and he bequeathed his private library to the public, and added to it a school with an adequate endowment. His tomb is also in our cemetery, as he died here in retirement, surrounded by his children, who were almost all peasants.

'Our annals state that almost all the inhabitants of Ouang-Mo-Khi were present at his obsequies. I could tell you of several of our relatives who somewhat resemble those I have mentioned, but all this is hardly worthy of your attention. Most of the inhabitants of our valley could tell you as much of his own ancestors. We like to recall them as we do the happy moments of our existence, but it is necessary to have lived there to be able to do that.' 'I must have been one of the sons of your hundred families, Ouang-Sien-Sen, in one of the former lives you believe in, for all you say of your ancestors touches me as nearly as if they were mine.' 'Ah, Si-Lao-Yé, are not all men brothers?'[1]

[1] Translation of the proverb: 'Le hay tche long, hiay hiong ty ye.'—*Proverbes Chinois*, by M. Paul Perny.

'That is well said, Ouang-Ming-Tse, but I beg you to continue your narrative. Let us leave antiquity on one side, and tell me how your father managed.' 'I have told you, Si-Lao-Yé, that he was the fourth of fourteen children. He had children of his own when the grandfather died; but his young brothers and sisters were not of age to shift for themselves. It was therefore impossible to break up the community, and such a thing was not even thought of.

'Matters remained as they were under the presidency of the eldest brother, the grandmother having died soon after her husband. All continued to live under the same roof, and to eat at the same table; it was cheaper, and the education of the little children more easy.

'I was beginning to grow up, and I remember all this as if it were yesterday. Two of my aunts were married, and only visited us at the New Year, when they passed three or four days with us. My uncle, the literate, had so remunerative a situation in another province that he was able to leave a portion of his inheritance to the community. There remained at home five girls and six boys, of whom four were married and had nine children. That made twenty-four persons, to whom must be added four yearly servants, three field labourers, and one woman for house-work.

'As long as the community lasted, we lived in great comfort on the eighty meous of land we possessed, but

when my aunts married, and my youngest uncle went to live at Fou-Cheou, all this changed. The latter, who required money for his business, wished for his share of the inheritance, and the mandarin, whose family increased more rapidly than his salary, took advantage of the circumstance to do the same. As it was also clear that sooner or later a dissolution of the community was inevitable, it was decided to carry it out at once. Just at that time the neighbours, having more land than they required, desired to sell a part of it, which made the operation more easy. The seven brothers began by dividing the inheritance into eight equal parts, two of which with the paternal house belonged of right to the eldest son, while those belonging to the merchant and mandarin were bought by the community, reduced to five brothers, at a price to be paid in three years, and bearing interest in the meanwhile. The community also rented the fields belonging to the neighbours, with the option of purchase in a given time. Then a new division was made. The whole, amounting to forty meous, was divided into five parts, one of which was allotted to each brother in addition to what he already owned.

'Houses were then built for those who did not possess any, and as soon as one was finished, the owner took possession. All this took time, but at the end of three years, thanks to the savings effected by the community, all the fields were paid for, and the division completed.

'The principal cultivation and harvests were still carried out in common, and all assistance was afforded by one to the other; but each lived in his own house, and the products of the fields belonged to the owners, who cultivated them according to taste.'

'I quite understand, Ouang-Sien-Sen. But if your neighbours had not been willing to dispose of the fields which the increase of your family required, what then?' 'We have relations near this who have no more land than we had then, and are more numerous; we should have done like them. The soil is more generous than is generally supposed.'

'Very likely; but if you had not had enough?'

'Two or three of my uncles would have gone to a less thickly peopled valley to ask their sisters and brothers-in-law for a small field, which they would sooner or later have become proprietors of.'

'And if that had been impossible?'

'They would have gone further, that is all. I know of places in this province and elsewhere where the population is not more than half as numerous as here. They would have been well received. All who labour are members of the same family.

'But what would have happened in a similar case in your country?'

'In our country, Ouang-Sien-Sen, the population is much less than here, and half the land is still in forest and marsh.'

'Is it the same throughout the West?'

'I am sorry to say it is.'

'It is different with us; but what I fail to understand is why Europeans are constantly making war against other countries instead of employing all their strength in cultivating their own territory and developing the population.'

I did not answer the remark. Ouang-Ming-Tse would still less have understood that the barrenness of part of our territory, the scarcity of the population, and the state of war which characterise Europe, are the action of a handful of private egoists, and a barbarous legislation.

I saw he was on the train of reflections unfavourable to European civilisation, and I cut him short by returning to the subject of our conversation.

'You have told me, Ouang-Sien-Sen, that your two uncles who left Ouang-Mo-Khi have replaced the fields they disposed of by others bought in your neighbourhood; but what would they have done if they had not succeeded in business?'

'The sale of real property forming part of the paternal inheritance is always subject to cancellation during a certain time. My uncles would have returned home and received back their fields, or an equivalent quantity of land, at the same price at which they sold it, which they would have paid by degrees.'

'I understand that; but what becomes of domestic worship when the separation of a family takes place? Is the moral connection equally dissolved? In a word,

what were the relations between your uncles and the remainder of the family?'

'Generally speaking, Si-Lao-Yé, when a separation is effected it is because all the sons are in a condition to live by themselves. They are married, and frequently have adult children. They can thus conform to the customs and duties of the ancestral worship without leaving home. They have the right to do so. The right is, however, never exercised until after the decease of one of the founders of the new home—either father or mother. Until then all meet at the house of the eldest brother. In all cases it is at his house that the anniversaries of the father and mother and the family feasts are held. It is the same with the feasts of the seasons. If the families possess an ancestral temple specially consecrated to the common worship of their relations, the meetings are held there. At great anniversaries, such as those of Confucius and illustrious ancients, the meetings are held at the home of the headman of the village. The necessary cost of these solemnities is defrayed from the increased portion of inheritance allotted to the eldest brother at the division, with the addition of such donations as may be made from time to time by the wealthier members of the family. If the amount is still insufficient, every one coming to the meeting brings his contribution. We managed in this way. As regards my uncles the merchant and literate, as soon as they ceased to be able to attend our feasts regularly, we sent them an

extract from the family record, setting out their descent up to the fourth of our ancestors, after which they managed matters as they liked. But it is fair to say they seldom missed our great solemnities.'

'Thank you, Ouang-Sien-Sen. I have only two questions more to ask you. Does the family judicial power extend to those of the family who have separated themselves from it, whether present or at a distance?'

'Certainly it does, Si-Lao-Yé. What recourse would they have if not that of their family? Why send them an extract of the family record if not to enable them to claim this right in case of need? How could one abandon relations, unless in grave and urgent cases, to the tribunals of the mandarins? It would be a disgrace; the proverb says: "Mandarins and the law are not for honest people."'

'The proverb is right. Are the expenses, either of the Buddhist ceremonies which accompany funerals, or of the religious services which many persons cause to be held for the repose of the souls of the dead, as obligatory as those of the ancestral worship?'

'No, unless specially desired by the deceased; but it is rarely that people do not contribute if they can, in order to be in the custom, and avoid appearing singular in trifling matters, and especially to avoid being suspected of avarice.'

'From the way you speak of these things I may guess you are not a Buddhist?'

'Oh, I have studied its doctrine. I agree with the

Master[1] that there is only one thing of which I am certain—it is that I live; and I only consider as true and necessary the doctrines my life teaches me. My reason admits no more. I should not, however, be telling you the truth if I allowed you to believe me quite indifferent to a number of superstitious practices of great antiquity, more ancient than Buddhism, used by the bonzes to work on the popular mind.

'When, for instance, our crops are threatened by rain or drought, how can I help wishing for a change of weather, and it is but a little way from a wish to a prayer. Then I go in procession with the rest of the people to the fields to pray for the intercession of the spirits. You may have noticed a coloured image on the chimneypiece of the kitchen in my house. It is that of a saint which is handed down from father to son in my family, and I am sure the women pray to it from time to time. I do not believe in the efficacy of such prayers; but the image is an heirloom, which it would appear to me impious to remove. There is a custom among the midwives of hanging an old piece of bronze money round the neck of newly-born children; it is considered an all-powerful amulet against disease. You may have seen my last grandson wearing one; neither I nor my son raised any objection. When the last portion of my house was constructed, I consented to the burying under the door of some salt, a few grains, and a red paper with the name of a star

[1] Confucius.

written upon it—a charm said to keep away bad influences from workers, and to assure good fortune to the dwellers. I confess such ideas are not unpleasant to me. You perhaps are aware that the peony is considered as an omen of good fortune if it flourishes well and abundantly; the contrary if it bears but few flowers, and they open badly. There is no truth in it, of course; but that does not prevent my eyes and heart being full of joy and hope for the day after looking at the large pink and red flowers of ours, as I never fail to do every morning. It is beautiful just now. Have you noticed it, Si-Lao-Yé? The worst of it is, that if it grew badly one would become discouraged; but I take care it does not. However, there are enough omens to make one forget that the important point after all is not to allow oneself to be ruled by any one of them. Are you not of this opinion?'

'Perhaps so, Ouang-Sien-Sen; but we have talked enough philosophy; let us go back to our subject when I interrupted you—your uncles and father were each living in their own house.'

'Yes, and we had paid all our debts; in three years we had given, to our two uncles and the neighbours, about 2000 taels (16,000 francs, £640), and we had expended 170 taels in the construction of the four houses, a short time after the marriage of my youngest aunt, who was provided with a dowry and a trousseau of at least 200 taels. My father and his brothers were much

worried for money, and we were only saved by having kept together. If we had not done so, I do not know what we should have done. The five families already contained forty persons, but there were only seven able to labour in the fields. I was fifteen or sixteen, but as I was destined for a literate my time was taken up in study, and I could render no service. The rest were women and children.

'Seven workers are not sufficient for one hundred and twenty meous, and you may perhaps say that in that case we should have bought less land. But we were obliged to think of the future; each year brought two or three more mouths, and it was therefore impossible to abandon our cultivation. There was only one method—to have recourse to extraneous aid, to be dispensed with gradually as the boys grew up. This was done, and instead of one yearly hand, we employed three, and added a second buffalo to the one we possessed. This relieved the men of labour only requiring strength, and work requiring skill and care was better done. Under the combined domestic and field economy all went better than before, but the advantages resulting from the new aids were not at once felt.

'We had expended so much money that our savings were reduced to nothing, and time was required to gain fresh profits from the soil, while our wants were daily increasing. Actual food was not deficient, but there are other necessities in a numerous family. The

idea of taking me away from my studies was mooted, and it would soon have been carried out. My father was in fact worse situated than my uncles. Some of them had fewer children than he, others had them of an age when they could be of service. My father had no other help than my eldest brother, and his share of the labourers' wages was higher in proportion. This may not seem much, but it was added to many other anxieties.

'My mother never said anything when the common expenses between my father and his brothers were spoken of, for we would all have rather died than give in, but there were nothing but laments when she was obliged to take sapèques from her chest. I can hardly think of it without smiling at this moment, and we might have been much more unhappy, and for a much longer time. If we had been alone, we could not have afforded a buffalo, since we had only two for five establishments, and it would have been the same with other things. And besides, our neighbours were our near relations, and so we were morally as united as if we had not ceased to live under the same roof. It is a great thing to have such help at hand, and though doubtless if we had dispersed we should all have acquired other friends and associates, there would have been a great difference.

'When a man changes his country he changes his cultivation and his habits. All this is not accomplished without difficulty; everything is easy for us here because

we have known it for eight hundred years. Here, all speaks to us of our people; the water running through our fields which they laid out, the trees they planted, their temples and graves, and the very legends which our mothers tell us of them, all keep their memory alive here. We have been at home here for eight hundred years.'

Ouang-Ming-Tse was much moved when finishing this part of his tale—his voice shook; and I—why should I not confess it?—was as much moved as he, though for other reasons. I had just heard a peasant tell the history of his family for a part of several centuries; I had heard him make bygone generations live again and pass before my eyes, while I, the child of a presumably higher civilisation, scarcely knew where the ashes of my nearest relatives lay! There is no reason I should not confess the tears this reflection drew from me, or the bitterness with which my heart was filled. The idea of my Fatherland, though the word had never been spoken, suddenly struck upon my mind with a force I had never felt till that moment, and a splendour hitherto undreamed of. For the first time it was revealed to me with precision, depth, elevation in lieu of the vague sentimentalism which had hitherto attached to it. Can the Fatherland be said really to have a being where the scattered population are separated by distances untrodden by the foot of man, by forests never animated by his presence, and by wastes never cultivated by his hand? Can it be said

to exist where there have never been generations, where the forgetfulness of predecessors is so complete that the desert has taken the place of their gardens? Can it be said to exist where nothing is, where immense quantities of land, without population, and yet belonging to individuals, place between one and the other distance, egoism and hatred? Can it be said to exist among a people which wilfully reduces the number of its people, and to whom, as a matter of fact, posterity is an enemy?

'To create a Fatherland, let the wilderness disappear, extend the field of good, narrow that of evil, barrenness and death.'[1]

Let the laziness of custom vanish. So arrange matters that, from one end of the country to the other, men may be so crowded that no spoken word may be lost in space.

See that every clod of earth produces its ear of corn, that solidarity reigns over all generations, that the memory of the past and hope for the future fill every mind and heart, and then there will be indeed a Fatherland.

When 100,000,000 men can hear its voice, and pronounce the sweet and powerful name, the Fatherland will be a reality.

Such were my reflections during the repose which followed the last words of Ouang-Ming-Tse. Was it the effect of approaching evening, or the eloquence of

[1] Michelet, la Bible de l'humanité.

the last rays of the sun, which setting there was about to illuminate the distant country so dear to my heart, or of the deep silence which surrounded us, and which deepened our inmost feelings?

I do not know; but it is a fact that a similar sentiment had produced a current of extraordinary sympathy between this Chinese peasant and myself. We were looking at each other, and it seemed to me that he guessed my sorrow. Let those who have never left their native country, and do not know how much one may desire to see it again, laugh at me if they like, but for an instant I thought we should embrace each other.

IV.

I went to see my friend again the next day, and found him awaiting me.

'Come in,' he called out as soon as he saw me; 'come in; we want you.'

'I am at your service, Ouang-Sien-sen. What is the matter?'

'The marriage of my grand-daughter is decided upon, and we were waiting for you to fix the day. You know that the first, sixth, and twentieth of each month are favourable dates according to our ideas, but all the family are anxious for you to be present, and we wish to ask you which of these three days will suit you best.'

'I am much afraid, my elder brother, I shall not be able to prolong my stay till then.' We were, in fact, approaching the end of the month, and it was not probable that the marriage could take place before the last fortnight of the following month, and the end of my leave was near at hand. I had some difficulty in making my friends understand this. They seemed extremely grieved, and I was not less so. A foreigner is rarely admitted as I was to the intimacy of a Chinese family, and the evidence they gave me of their trust and friendship was so exceptional that I could not fail to be touched by it. There was, however, one thing which helped me to resist both their requests and my own wishes, which was that, as the first part of the feasts would take place at the house of the bridegroom's parents, I should have been obliged to force myself upon the hospitality of a family with which I was unacquainted, and also take a journey of several leagues in a direction contrary to my home.

In declining an invitation I should have eagerly accepted but for the consideration I have mentioned, I took the opportunity of putting to Ouang-Ming-Tse a question which had been in my mind since the first day.

As a rule Chinese girls are married early, generally in their fifteenth or sixteenth year, but Sin-Lien[1] was nearly seventeen and unmarried. There would have been nothing surprising in this in Europe, in spite of her beauty, grace, and her eyes, black like those of all

[1] Open nymphæa, a flower.

Chinese, but with a charming expression; but in China it was an anomaly, which interested me, not from curiosity but on account of the sincere friendship I had for each member of the family. I had never been able to ask a direct question on the subject, because the subject was one of great delicacy, and it is good taste to maintain the utmost reserve in speaking of the women of a family; but in offering my congratulations to the grandfather on the news he had brought me, I could very well ask what had so kept back the happiness of the two young people. 'The marriage should have taken place two years ago,' he answered; 'both families were in the same position as now, and the day was about to be fixed, when my grand-daughter fell ill, and was weak for a long time.

'Soon after her recovery her *fiancé* lost his grandmother, and we were thus delayed until the present time. We have shortened the delay as it is considerably, because it ought to have been twenty-seven months in duration; but as we are persons whose acts are of small importance, we considered 300 days sufficient. The souls of our ancestors will pardon us, and I hope that this time my grandchild will not be long in becoming Mrs. Kou-Ouang-Chi.' [1]

'I hope so also, Ouang-Sien-sen; all the more, because such a delay must seem long to the young people. Have they met each other?'

[1] A woman does not lose her family name when taking that of her husband; she adds it to the latter.

'Yes, when they were children, but not for ten years.'

'Not at all?'

'I do not think so, except perhaps at a distance, once or twice.'

'In that case perhaps they may not be able to recognise each other.'

'It is probable.'

It was probable, and I was not ignorant of the fact. Twenty times at least had I endeavoured to obtain an explanation of the motives of so strange a custom, for it does not always happen that the two betrothed have the chance of meeting during their childhood. It happens more often that they do not meet at all until the marriage. Whether the cause be indifference or precaution, the fact always seemed mysterious to me, and I was determined, if possible, to obtain an explanation. I made another attempt. 'Let us suppose, however, that the bride and bridegroom should not be pleasing to each other.'

'Why should they not be so, Si-Lao-Yé?'

'I am not speaking of your grand-daughter and her intended, Ouang-Sien-sen; what I want to learn is this, why do the Chinese forbid all intercourse between betrothed people?'

'It must be so, Si-Lao-Yé, since our customs do not allow of the mingling of the sexes, outside the family circle, before marriage, and marriage between young people of the same name is prohibited. But

the point at which you wish to arrive, is the reason of the separation of the sexes? I think the ancients, from whom our laws and customs are derived, must have fully considered the matter before taking up the position. Whether they were right or wrong is difficult to say. We can compare our system with others, and you, who are well acquainted with other civilisations than ours, are better able to give an opinion than I. Our rules are not inflexible, though the severity of them possesses this advantage, that the slightest deviation is at once noticeable, and precautions can be taken before greater mischief is done; actually however, every man is master of his own house, and no one can find fault with him, as long as general customs are not infringed. You may have noticed that you were eagerly welcomed at my home, although you are not only a stranger, but a foreigner. You were better known to me, however, than I have yet told you. I have a friend in the office of the Taotai of N——, and I wrote to him immediately after your first meeting with my son. Would you not have done the same thing in my place? Concerning our marriages, the parties are not so completely strangers to one another as you think; the necessary go-between[1] and the gossips do not fail to entertain them with news of each other.

[1] No marriage takes place, even among families well acquainted with each other, without the services of an intermediary, whose duties strikingly resemble those of the bayolan of our Brittany.

'Really, however, all depends upon education ; and regarding marriage as a serious matter, we endeavour to reduce the enthusiasm and imagination of youth to a minimum, in order to avoid painful surprises.

'We take especial care to influence our children to pay attention to character before all things, and when once this result has been obtained, and we have gained their sympathy on this point, what is more natural than that they should allow us the choice of their life companion? We know better than they what their weaknesses and faults are, and what chance they have of mutually pleasing each other; and if, during the long period of negotiations, we see that we have been mistaken, popular superstition in the form of a passing bird, or such and such a combination of written characters, affords us a ready excuse to break them off. If the young people were permitted to see each other, what would become of our precautions and of our principle of not allowing marriage between relations? It would be a complete upset of all things.'

'Your precautions, Ouang-Sien-sen, are superfluous in view of the education you give.'

'Young people must not be asked for efforts beyond their age and nature, Si-Lao-Yé, and ours are not saints. You must remember that we marry young, and to wait until reason was fully established, would cause nothing but disorder. Many persons would not marry at all, especially girls, who grow old

much more quickly than boys. What would become of morality, society, and justice? Once married, we soon become attached to our wives, and our wives to us, and I can say we are happy.

'I do not think there are a hundred Chinese among ten thousand who would not say the same thing. How many would there be in countries where marriage is made under other conditions, without speaking of individuals, who would then be condemned to celibacy? Can you tell me, Si-Lao-Yé?'

I did not know, and I do not know now, so I leave Ouang-Ming-Tse's question to the reader to answer for himself.

'Clearly,' replied Ouang-Ming-Tse, who doubtless was afraid of having hurt my pride, 'I am speaking of what I do not understand; every people has its own character and customs, and it is probable that things are neither better nor worse with one than the other.'

This conclusion appeared subject to argument, but I said nothing, desiring to end a discussion which had continued further than I intended, and merely asked Ouang-Ming-Tse to return to our former subject.

'By all means, Si-Lao-Yé, but from where we left it, our history, which has now become mine, will soon be ended. I failed twice at the public examinations, but thanks to my uncle, I succeeded in obtaining a situation in the office of a prefecture, by means of which I hoped to continue my studies, without cost to my

parents, and present myself a third time with better fortune.

'Time elapsed, and when I was thirty I was still unable to carry out my intentions. I was married, and had four children, and was compelled to earn a living. In the little leisure my situation gave me, I made copies, and had no time for study. I was much discouraged, also; even supposing I were successful, it was too late to hope for any career in the public service, and the prospect of dragging on my life in an over-worked and under-paid situation at my uncle's heels, was so repugnant to me that I often thought I had better go back to my peasant's work. I was only forty years old, and my son, Po-Y, was nearly fifteen; the two of us could easily repair lost time, and in any case I should leave him in a better and more honourable position than my own had been. My father's death decided me, and I resolved to join my brothers in the common inheritance. They helped me with the marriage expenses of my three eldest daughters, who were betrothed, but whose marriage had been postponed on different pretexts, because I was not rich enough to afford the expense and could not avow the real reason. I have only had since two other children: a daughter, married a few years back, and a second son, whom you have seen, the last of my children, who was married years ago.'

'Why did he separate himself from you while still so young?' I asked Ouang-Ming-Tse.

'I was going to tell you, Si-Lao-Yé. Until two years ago, neither my brother, nephews, nor myself had ever thought of any separation of our interests. We each possessed our own home, but our work and interests were in common. Such a state of things was not without inconvenience, and could not go on for ever, but no one entertained any serious idea of a change.

'The coming of my young daughter-in-law led us all to think of it. She was of a proud and restless character, and was persuaded that her husband was being treated with injustice. There is a proverb which says "a man should listen to his wife, and not believe her," but my son was only too disposed to believe his, who possessed an extraordinary influence over him. She seemed always gentle and obedient, though really she was never in agreement with anyone, and was even wanting in proper deference towards my wife. There was only one remedy for this state of things,[1] and that was to send her and her

[1] According to the exact reading of the legal code, and of common custom, another means was open by which the family could have relieved themselves of their embarrassment. The first of the seven justifications for divorce in China, is want of deference towards father-in-law or mother-in-law; but one condition is required which is not spoken of in the text, because it is presupposed—and that is, the consent of the husband. For this reason the Ouang-Ming-Tse were unable to make use of this method. The article in question is really rather a resource and guarantee given to the woman against the caprices of her husband. It must not be forgotten that she is chosen by the parents of the latter. It is one thing to enumerate the laws and customs of a country, and quite another to show the use made of them.

husband to live by themselves; and in order to take away all pretext for their suspicion, to give them their share of the common property.

'We therefore decided upon a separation of our common interests, which was carried out six months ago. It cost us some pain at the time, but we now congratulate ourselves upon it. My son has not ceased to come to our house, and I have no reproach to make for him; as to his wife, she seems still to owe us a grudge, but signs have not been wanting to lead us to believe that she will soon make her submission, which, it is unnecessary to tell you, we shall not make hard for her. My wife and I are beginning to grow old, and find it hard to be without our children. Is it not just that the daughters-in-law should replace the daughters who have left us?

'It is very sad to witness one's family growing smaller, and the parents are happy who have more sons than daughters.'

'You have not told us how yours became married, Ouang-Sien-sen.'

'The first two married peasants, the third and the last a merchant. They come to see us two or three times a year. You see, they have not forgotten us; but they are none the less lost to us. They no longer belong to the family.'

The above is a faithful translation of the history of the family Ouang-Ming-Tse as related by its chief. I have modified it only on one point. When speaking

of a member of his family he seldom indicated his age by the number of his years, but almost invariably by mentioning the then reigning Emperor and the year of his reign. This is a Chinese custom, and appears to have none of the inconveniences which might appear inseparable from it in our eyes.

This manner of dating events and measuring time seems to carry with it no inconvenience to the Chinese, who are very familiar with the history of their country; but, however that may be, they believe they thus unite themselves more definitely to the collective life of humanity of which they form part, and the idea is so dear to them that they are prepared to make any sacrifice to retain it.

V.

'You mên heiou ouen yûn kou sé kouan tcho yong yen pien te tché'—On entering a house do not ask what is the fortune of its inhabitants; look at their faces, and you will know it.—Since I had become acquainted with the Ouang I had always conformed to this recommendation of the wisdom of nations, and I had always endeavoured to apply it to the best of my ability. I knew every wrinkle of their countenances, and every corner of their home. I had noticed the order, ease, comfort and happiness given by security for the morrow. If I had fallen among them direct

from France, I should not have hesitated to attribute to them the possession of thirty or forty hectares (seventy-five to one hundred acres) of good sunny land, or an income of from five to six thousand francs (£200 to £240).

I knew, however, they possessed only twenty-nine mous—that is to say, a hectare and ninety-four centiares (a little more than two and a half acres)—and as I had seen many other families of peasants under similar conditions, their position did not astonish me.

Nevertheless, the less exceptional it seemed to be, the more I wondered at it. The more I realised the existence of the phenomenon, the greater the pleasure I took in its analysis, and in comprehending its general existence. Nor was I ever tired of proving to myself that it was no marvel peculiar to this or that family or commune, canton or province. As by degrees I more and more realised the simplicity of the methods which create the fertility of the soil in China, and the richness of its agriculture, the more pains I took to assure myself of their sufficiency for all purposes. I had been informed that in Europe a capital of seven or eight hundred francs (£28 to £32) per hectare (2½ acres) was essential to bring out the resources of the land, and that even with that amount it was often difficult to obtain an adequate return.

I saw that in China, three simple advantages—

justice, water, and manure—ensured an abundance to the first comer, and that almost without an expenditure of capital, great skill, or crushing effort, the soil repaid a hundredfold the grain and toil expended upon it. I regarded it as a duty to collect as much documentary evidence as possible in support of so important and, I may add, consoling a fact, and I never lost an opportunity of doing so. I seldom met with more convincing proof than that afforded me by the Ouang family. Its fortune, whatever it was, had been entirely acquired by small cultivation on a small property, since no individual members of the family had ever possessed more than one or two hectares ($2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 acres).

The property had once amounted to nine hectares ($22\frac{1}{2}$ acres), but it was then divided among five families and forty persons. This important point was clearly established by the narrative of Ouang-Ming-Tse. The peasants with whom chance had previously brought me into contact, although polished and hospitable, and even thoughtful, had rarely been so to the same extent as the Ouang family; and whether it was that our greater intimacy had enabled me to notice in them higher qualities of mind and character than in others, or whether they actually possessed them owing to the superior education of their chief, there certainly existed between us a sympathy which made no question of mine appear impertinent or indiscreet to them. They perfectly understood the objects of

my inquiry, and assisted me to the best of their ability. I determined therefore to push it as far as possible. For the moment, what I desired to ask them was in no way likely to offend any peasant. I was principally interested in the industry to which they owed their prosperity, and from this point of view the special details I was in want of possessed only a relative significance. Agriculture in China exists under such similar conditions in all parts of the country that the actual work of the inhabitants becomes in some respects a secondary matter, while of great importance from other points of view. This is so much the case that it would be very difficult to form a faint idea of the part attributable to them without a knowledge of the general conditions under which they work, and which simplify matters for them in many respects.

This statement requires some explanation. Agriculture is governed in China by three elements, peasant proprietorship, the employment of water, and the nature of the manure. These elements are met with everywhere, and (the reader will find the fact worthy of notice) they result not from chance, but from a thoughtfulness which prepared the way for them, and by which they were derived from the remotest antiquity. As regards peasant proprietorship, if it be remembered that the soil belongs to the community, that unoccupied lands are resumed by it and possession given to those willing to make use of

them, that the taxation on the metrical system tends to drive non-workers from the soil—if the reader will recall to mind the institution of the patrimonial land, which not only guarantees the individual against the tyranny of a few privileged individuals, but which, by fixing the possession in perpetuity of a small portion of the soil in the hands of any one who has once acquired it, forms a barrier against the creation of large properties—if the reader will, in short, recall to mind the great facilities for the transfer and parcelling out of the remainder of the soil, he cannot fail to perceive in all these institutions so many precautions in favour of small as against large properties.[1]

[1] The Chinese have never believed in the utility or advisability of large properties, even for a time. It would appear, on the contrary, that it has been the constant endeavour of their legislators to preserve them from such a system, which they have always regarded as constituting a possible permanent danger. It has certainly existed in China; but whatever its duration, merely as an accident destined to a natural disappearance under the influence of the laws and institutions I have mentioned. If a further proof be required, the case of Japan may be cited, which has always followed on the lines laid down by China, very exactly if at a distance. Large properties have never existed there, and rather than permit them, the portions of territory which the want of population did not permit the cultivation of, have been left untouched, and the inhabitants have been concentrated on determined spaces, where every family occupies a small lot on which small cultivation is carried on after the Chinese manner. The remainder, held in reserve, either by the State or in the hands of daimios or the Mikado, awaits the coming of future generations. The Japanese do not consider there is any loss by this system, as much raw and net produce being brought in by small cultivation as by an extensive system of cultivation applied to the whole country.

Regarding the employment of water, the intention of the legislator is sufficiently shown by the establishment of the most gigantic and admirable system of irrigation that has ever been dreamed of. Whence could he have drawn the inspiration and audacity necessary for such an enterprise four thousand years ago, at a time when China possessed barely a few millions of inhabitants? It was certainly not to water deserts, forests, and lands that he created, in the midst of vast expanses, the reservoirs, canals, and weirs which astonish the imagination of to-day. What he desired, doubtless, after guaranteeing to every one the enjoyment of the soil, was to guarantee him equally the means of putting it to good use, and to ensure that every parcel of land could be watered was to ensure every parcel of land being cultivated.

Water renders all soil fertile, and covers sand with crops; and if water be plentiful, it matters little if the arable soil be thin, or even if it exist, since a second soil can be made and fertilised by water above that which is impermeable. With water always at hand, no deep labour is required; and with water on the surface, vegetation is not compelled to plunge its roots deep into the soil. It dispenses also with the use of powerful, heavy, and costly implements. One buffalo, a wooden harrow, a spade and a hoe, suffice for all purposes. Could any more democratic or inexpensive means be found, or any more completely justifying the construction of the canals?

It is only necessary to open the book of rites of the Cheou dynasty, which existed twelve hundred years before our era, to be convinced that the manure specially recommended is that so universally employed in China as to have received the name of 'Chinese manure.' It is well known that the arable soil, relatively small in extent, was then worked on account of the State, as it was until lately, if it is not now, in Japan. It was cultivated according to plans sent out by the ministry of population, and under the care of special functionaries. There were inspector-directors for colonisation, for agriculture, and for irrigation. The peasantry were instructed when the rice fields should be prepared, sown, flooded, and denuded of water, and when the growing plants should be transplanted. They were given full information as to the soil suitable for such and such a crop, what manure was advisable, and how it could be best applied.

The system, in fact, was one of a universal and practical science of agriculture, which is now the glory and prosperity of China. The Teteou-li, the book of which I have spoken, contains a large number of chapters, in which these rules are codified. The manure in question is the most common of all, and the most economical, for the fabrication of which neither waste land for large animals are required, but which is produced daily by man himself.

In the eyes of the Chinese legislator it is the most precious of all. Small properties were created in order that it might be duly collected and utilised; and it is through its agency that the soil regains its lost virtues, and man is assured his food and liberty, while his race developes in proportions hitherto unknown. While it is collected with care and solicitude, other manures are not neglected, and some strange ones are used—a practice which may perhaps be explained by the large surfaces there covered with forest and inhabited by large numbers of wild beasts. 'The inspectors of agriculture,' says the Cheou-li, 'will devote their attention to the methods of preparing seed by means of manure. They will first cause the grains to be wetted in a bath of broth obtained from beef-bones, then, according to whether they are destined for red, yellow, black or white, compact, friable or flimsy soils, they will cause them to be crisped in the powdered excrement of oxen, sheep, goats, dogs, pigs, *foxes*, *badgers*, *deer*, &c. I can only indicate here the substance of these instructions, but a literal translation of them would cause amazement at their wisdom, which might almost be supposed to have received the same inspiration as that of Moses.

The manures here spoken of are of an auxiliary description, which, from their very rarity, can be but little used, and are, in fact, nothing but the milk and broth given to newly-born infants. But the principal manure, the food of adult plants, the bread of the

coming harvest, to which the solemn author of the Cheou-li gives all preference, is that for which our peasants, engineers, and municipalities in Europe profess the greatest indifference, scorn, disgust, and hatred, which they hold responsible for all our iniquities, carelessness, and ignorance, which our scientific men have the least to say in defence of —a manure which all agree in conveying to the sea at a cost of hundreds of millions, without thinking for a moment that it is the soil itself they are wasting.[1]

I have lived ten years in China, and have passed five years in districts fertilised by human manure alone, and I can affirm—can swear, if need be—that my health has not suffered, and that the Chinese populations are as healthy and as little subject to contagious diseases as in Europe. I wish my evidence could be listened to.

And if it be objected that our social condition does not allow of our doing otherwise, so much the worse for it; it is its own judgment and condemnation.

[1] There is nothing easier than to lay the blame of our own faults on some one or something else. A splendid canal may be built at a cost of two hundred millions to convey the produce of the Paris sewers to the Channel; but the question is not so easily solved. If it be true that our sewage is a danger to the public health, it is because we do not know how to make proper use of it in time. Let our cultivators rival each other in their desire for it, as is the case in China, and come into the towns to fetch it, and the danger will disappear. Once brought into contact with the soil and with vegetables, and nothing but benefit is derived from it.

'It is the duty of the inspectors of agriculture,' says the Cheou-Li, 'to take care that none of it is lost or wasted, for it makes the strength and health of the people. They will cause it to be collected in vases, in which it must ferment for six days; when used, it must be mixed with ten times its bulk of water. It is to be used with the rice-plant while the latter is growing, not before, as often as may be necessary, but not oftener; it is the plant, not the soil, which requires nourishment, and evaporation is waste. On lands which are not flooded, it must be laid at the foot of the plants while they are growing, for if placed between the lines, a large proportion will be wasted. By thus dealing with it wisely and economically, but little will be expended, and abundant harvests will be obtained, and the people made happy. In the northern provinces, where no crops are grown during the winter, the surplus manure should be dried and mingled with earth, to be conveyed to the south in the shape of bricks.'

It is impossible, it will be seen, to establish more clearly the law of *circulus*, which China has so long religiously observed, and to which she owes her survival over so many nations which have disappeared during 4000 years, and her power of holding in check the industrial and military power of Europe.

Thus soil, water, and manure for all, was the end laid down by the former sages of China, and so well pursued in every aspect by the entire nation, that

there is not a corner of its territory where it has not been attained.

Western nations have hoped to base their unity on political conventions, and on the existence of pretended natural frontiers, or on ethnographical resemblances of languages and customs. We know what such bases are worth; how easy it is to thrust them on one side, and when that cannot be done, to make a laughing-stock of them. China has founded her unity upon the inseparable conjunction of the soil and justice, and I cannot help smiling when I hear of plans of conquest and dismemberment spoken of at her cost. She can only be conquered by the same arms she employs herself. But we should then be conquered ourselves, and all our private unities, instead of dividing us, would make one grand and complete unity, against which nothing could prevail—that of the human race.

VI.

Let me state at once the wonderful results of the programme I have just analysed. The most general and most immediate is the system of small cultivation, which is even more widely spread than that of peasant proprietorship. A few individuals may be met possessing as many as thirty, fifty, and even three hundred

hectares;[1] but the average, both in the north and south of China, does not exceed ten to twelve. It must be supposed that there this system, the merits and demerits of which have been already enlarged upon, possesses highly marked advantages, since it has been preferred to any system of cultivation on a large scale, even when the latter would appear more advisable.

Another evident result has been, if not the complete suppression, at all events an extreme reduction in the surfaces cultivated for the food of animals, to the advantage of those devoted to crops destined to be the food of man. I may be allowed to observe here that it is a general belief that there are few large animals used either for labour or as food in China, and that this scarcity is caused by the want of pasturage; but this is a double mistake. There are certainly but few oxen and horses, but the number of buffaloes is very large, and I should not be surprised if it were relatively higher than that of oxen and horses in France, since one buffalo is required for every three hectares of land.[2]

This fact, which appears at first sight irreconcileable with the want of pasturage, is easily explained by the

[1] Translator's note: The hectare may be estimated roughly at 2½ acres.

[2] On this basis the bovine population in France would amount to more than sixteen millions, if peasant proprietorship were in vogue: it amounts to only thirteen millions actually.

existence of spade culture, as will be shortly shown. In the meanwhile it may be sufficient to state that China could, if it were thought advisable, largely increase the existing number of flesh-forming animals, without any modification of the existing agricultural system. And if this has not been done, it is because, in the first place, the alimentary equivalent of rice or corn is much more costly when converted into meat than when consumed as vegetable;[1] and secondly, because the Chinese are not as fully convinced as ourselves of the necessity of much meat in diet; and finally, because they are able to procure the quantity they regard as indispensable, in the shape of pork and fowls, at less cost than in the shape of oxen. Nor must it be forgotten that, as the principal part of their agriculture is constituted of rice fields, they are almost compelled to make use of the buffalo, whose flesh is almost uneatable. The respect and attachment in which the Chinese hold the animals which labour for them is a last reason, which it would be unjust to pass over. They rarely beat them, and treat them more kindly than is the case in Europe, the more naturally because, as a rule, each family possesses only one ox or buffalo, which thus becomes a domestic pet.

The absence of pasturage is, therefore, an advantage, and not an inconvenience, and the corresponding absence

[1] See the report of M. Eug. Tisseraud, Director of Agriculture to the Ministry of Agriculture in the Universal Exhibition at Vienna, 1873.

of butchers' meat in the diet of the Chinese cannot be imputed to it, since they might easily increase the production, if they had not other motives for dispensing with it, and numerous means of supplying its place.[1]

Spade culture, besides suppressing grass land, has permitted the introduction into China of a variety and quantity of crops impossible with cultivation on a large scale, each being effected in different ways and at different times, and often requiring manual care. There are at least seventy principal crops regularly cultivated throughout the Empire, and eight or ten, often more, on each farm of two or three hectares (five to seven and a half acres).[2] The whole of China is a garden, as has been often observed, and a garden of the richest description.

Rice yields from 3500 to 10,000 kilogrammes per hectare,[3] wheat from 15 to 50 and 60 hectolitres, tea and mulberries a value of from 5000 to 8000 francs. There are other plants not less precious: the sugar-cane; the wax tree; the ligustrum, on which exists the

[1] The larger animals only are referred to here. Sheep, which are excluded from certain provinces, are found in others where pasturage is reserved on the mountains. They are also bred in confinement, but this cannot be done so easily with sheep as with oxen, and while the flat, hot country in the south is not suitable to them, mutton is considered an unhealthy article of diet in the summer.

[2] I have given a list of the seventy principal crops in an essay upon the agricultural geography of China published in 1868 in the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie.*

[3] As in the plain of Chen-Tu, in Se-chuen, and many others.

insect which forms the whitest and most expensive wax known ; the beech trees, which nourish a particular kind of silkworm, from which, in two provinces alone, as much as forty thousand balls of silk are obtained annually, a tree the resin of which forms, without mixing, the most beautiful varnish in the world.

The returns I have given are merely in the gross, as it is not possible to give the net produce of one cultivation ; for example, no estimate can be made of the labour cost of three palm trees, a couple of tallow trees, one or two hundred square yards of beans, and a few square yards of tinctorial plants. The idea seems ridiculous. It is easy enough to imagine a collection of as many orange trees as a couple of acres will support, and I have done so in order to give some idea of the results obtained, but to estimate the gross product is as difficult as to analyse the net result. The truth is, that a collection of a thousand trees will never bear as much as if divided into small groups, and above all cultivated by different proprietors. It is the same as with the buffalo just mentioned, the less there is of it the more it weighs.

The question of net cost is even more difficult; it is impossible to value such infinitesimal quantities as the few minutes' work required by the berries of an oil tree, or the two or three minutes required to bestow a spadeful of manure upon a blade of rice or wheat, or such things as the taste and love which a man brings to bear upon such work. It is always the same: a

person attaches himself to a sheep, not to a flock; I am more fond of the lime tree in front of my door than of all the limes in the forest.

Why do the Chinese succeed so well with the oak silkworm, which we have been vainly trying to acclimatise for twenty-five years? Because each family brings up only a very small quantity. How do they contrive to preserve their crops from rust, cuscuta and other parasites, which they have even succeeded in exterminating? By taking care of the plants individually one by one. Let us suppose it possible to estimate exactly the time so expended, what value can we attach to the time itself? In the majority of cases it is that of the members of the family, and the same remark applies as that I made concerning the manure—they are not obliged to purchase it, it is their duty to expend it, by the mere fact of their breathing. When compelled to seek outside help, they employ so little and procure it so cheaply, that the cost of it to the crop is hardly worth speaking of. There is only one method of estimating the profits of the various branches of a cultivation, which is to consider the undertaking as a whole in which the value of each branch consists in the system of which it forms part. Agriculture, in fact, does not resemble manufacturing industry, neither the labour nor the production can be analysed. Every operation must be carried out, in some way or another, at the same time. If only rice or sugar-cane were cultivated, what would the cultivator do with his time

and land when once the harvest was gathered? Could one crop, which might fail, support all the charges and rent for a year? 'No,' replies spade culture; 'adopt me, and I will give you the secret of how not to lose a moment of your time, nor an inch of your land. I will assure you five times the price of your field, and I will so multiply your crops that you shall be able to sell them ten times less dearly.' China has followed this counsel and has not repented of it. The Chinese cannot tell you the exact cost of a bushel of rice or a pound of sugar, but thanks to spade culture the traveller will find all agricultural necessities extremely cheap, and as many families like that of Ouang-Ming-Tse as there are peasants.

Silk, among other things, is sold at a price which seriously threatens our French silk-growers, who are asking for protection. The system or secret of spade culture is too well known to need description here, though that part of it known as transplantation requires special mention. A small space of ground is chosen with a good exposure and sheltered from the wind by one of the walls of the house, and carefully prepared with good and rich soil, and so arranged as to be capable of being covered with frames or straw if required. This is only necessary in the north of China, where the winters are long and cold.

The seeds are sown here by the handful, and very thickly, and as soon as the plants have attained a certain degree of development they are removed and

transplanted to the place they are destined to complete their growth and ripen their fruits. Part of their existence is therefore passed on a small surface of a few square yards, and the time during which they require a larger space is so much shortened as to admit of the same field bearing several crops during the same year.

This is the main object of transplantation, or rather of the process known by this name, of which transplantation itself is but a part, but it is not the only one.

Persons who have thought little even about gardening know that the oftener a plant is transplanted in its youth the more vigorous it becomes. The pivot roots disappear and are replaced by a number of horizontal roots, which, by giving the plant a firmer hold upon the ground, enable it better to resist the wind, and which, lying near the surface, the more readily absorb all nutriment afforded by air, water, and manure. A transplanted plant grows more numerous branches than any other, and grows them more quickly, and when it is so isolated as to be easily approached and tended, it is easy to obtain almost miraculous results.

From a single blade of corn cultivated under similar conditions as many as sixty ears have been obtained.[1]

[1] Plants kept in nurseries for any time have a tendency to become etiolated, and put forth their branches slowly. To avoid this the Chinese never omit to steep the grains in a bath of manure. Absorption takes place by endosmosis, and strengthens the cotyledons, whence the young vegetable obtains its first nourishment.

The promises of spade culture were therefore not exaggerated, and they have even been surpassed, since it multiplies five-fold not only the crops of each field, but also the produce of each crop. Furthermore, it economises seed; a few litres (nearly a quart) of grain suffice for a hectare of land (two and a half acres), instead of two hectolitres and a half (nearly seven bushels). Nor is this all; if by spade culture a hectare produces as much as ten or twenty under the ordinary system, the surface to be worked is less extensive, the cartage is shorter, and fewer powerful animals are required. It is the same with the tools for a cultivation already simplified by the employment of water. If to those already mentioned we add a watering-pot and a dibble, we have nearly every requisite, and this is not one of the least advantages.

Nor is even this all; disposing as he does at will of the water and manure, which he has constantly at hand, it may well be imagined that the Chinese peasant troubles himself little about the distribution, rotation, and alternation of crops, and the general system intended to rest the soil after exhausting it, and to

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The roots are again steeped before transplantation. With the observance of these precautions, rice and corn fifteen to twenty centimetres (six to eight inches) in height can be transplanted without inconvenience. They are not prevented from ramifying from the crown and pushing out suckers, as the gardeners say. Instead of themselves preparing their plants for transplantation, the northern Chinese often obtain them from the southern provinces.

exhaust it after resting it. All this cunning and science are useless to him, his justice and devotion to duty taking their place. In return for the justice rendered to it, the soil shows no caprice. For centuries the same fields have borne twice a year the same crops of rice and corn; the other plants grown are at least as exhausting, and they succeed one another every six weeks, while after each the soil is as productive as before. His devotion ensures to him a possession of it, such as never lover has had of his mistress yet. There is yet another advantage obtained by the Chinese from spade culture, in the power of introducing into their cultivation a certain number of animals obtained from warm climates. It is sufficient so to calculate the period of seed gestation of the exotics as to ensure the transplantation being made at the precise moment when the heat and light of the season are most favourable to their flowering and fruit-bearing.[1] And this moment determines their place in the series of crops which succeed one another on the same ground. It is a true rotation of crops, but one founded upon the conditions of climate and not upon the convenience of the soil, and its object is the extension of these vegetables to one or two degrees of latitude beyond their natural habitation. One of the most remarkable of

[1] It may be remarked here that the Chinese do not distinguish climates by differences of temperature, but by the amount of daylight. They have climates of 13, 13½ 14, 14½, 15 hours, &c.; that is to say, countries where the time between the rising and the setting of the sun is 12, 13, 14 hours, &c.

these effects which can be cited is that of the corn now cultivated in Mongolia.

Long and cold winters, with a temperature often falling to thirty degrees below zero, summers very hot, but so short that the potato freezes in September, would seem to render this country useless for any other plant than the grasses of its endless pasturage, and a few trees in the most shaded spots; and in fact, until thirty years ago, though a few fields of oats were to be met with occasionally, there was not a blade of wheat. Since then the population has increased around the sparse watercourses, spade culture has come into vogue, and at all events where it is best practised, near the Great Wall, wheat transplanted at the end of May can now ripen. Another plant, the herbaceous cotton, which does not flourish north of the 36th or 37th parallels in other parts of the world, is grown in Manchuria north of the 40th.[1]

These examples might be multiplied, but I must confine myself within limits, and as I am speaking of climate, I may take the opportunity of replying to an objection which has often been made to me, and may perhaps have occurred to the reader: 'In China, as well as in Europe, it often hails, and, unless your Chinamen cover their fields with umbrellas, it is difficult to understand how spade culture can protect them from natural disasters.'

[1] In the same manner the melon and sweet potato might be ripened in our northern climates.

China replies easily to this objection, however grave it may appear. As regards the climate, without embarrassing myself with explanations in which I should probably lose myself, I will confine myself to stating that in China the seasons are more regular than with us, and even half-seasons are recognised. A Chinaman knows quite well on what day he will change his clothing for warmer or lighter. The Chinese reckon upon so many days' rain in spring, and so many in autumn, and these calculations rarely prove wrong. The droughts, the worst calamities in China, depend upon the winters. If the snow upon the high mountains of Thibet, whence come the two great rivers which water China, is not sufficiently abundant or thaws too quickly, the rivers and canals soon dry up, and unless an extraordinary rain falls the disaster is beyond remedy. Floods also caused by an excessive fall of snow, or too rapid a thaw in Thibet, do not cause so much harm, in spite of the ravages they make among a crowded population. They are mitigated to a certain extent by the canals, reservoirs, and embankments of the rivers, and when the scourge is past the peasants replant their fields with plants from other localities. The havoc disappears as if by enchantment. All Europeans who have witnessed it must have been struck by it. Heavy rains seldom cause much loss; they find a sufficient outlet by the canals and rivers. As far as late and early frosts and hail are concerned, if the Chinese have not yet learned

to protect their crops by means of tents and straw mattrasses, as is done for forcing frames and beds in horticulture, they would probably have done so if the accidents caused by these climatogical phenomena were as common as they are in Europe. In the meanwhile they repair the damage so caused by transplanting.

VII.

Thus water, soil, and manure on the one hand, on the other space, climate, and industry, form together the magnificent inheritance which the ancestors of the Chinese nation have left to their descendants. It is important to clearly understand that here man is not dependent upon those general conditions which are elsewhere against him, and which make him a slave and victim. The Chinese has conquered them. Water runs to supply his wants; he does as he likes with the soil; he mocks at the climate; he does not reckon with time; he has filled space and almost done away with tools. All these obstacles have disappeared. Never has man gained more brilliant victories, and it was to enable him to gain them that society, inspired by its founders, determined upon property for all, the use of the soil for each, and, conquering its natural repugnance, glorified that manure which we consider the most abominable. Nowhere has society done so much for the individual, nowhere does the latter owe

to it to such an extent his existence and his liberty. And yet he owes it something infinitely more precious still.

I have stated in a preceding chapter that labour among the Chinese is not a punishment but a blessing, and I have just shown that by muscular, mechanical effort the difficulty is considerably reduced; while there can be no pain in it for the man who is sure to gather the fruits of his labour, and not to see himself deprived of them by an idle landlord, or by the vicissitudes of climate. Under these conditions, labour is no longer what it is elsewhere, and becomes really a question of care, assiduity, address, wisdom and taste. The peasant, relieved from the necessity for effort, care and trouble, becomes an artist, and, to a certain extent, a man of science. No one knows better the precise physiological moment for the transplantation of rice, no one can divine as he can the exact needs of a stalk of wheat. The cleanliness of his fields is pushed almost to coquetry; to suit the shallowness of his tillage he has fashioned plants, those known as root-plants, in the way a sculptor kneads clay; instead of length he has given them shortness, roundness and size; he has collected wild plants, and has compelled them to produce leaves, fruits, and roots good for food.[1]

[1] Among others, a marsh reed known as cobu, which furnishes a vegetable as excellent as asparagus or salsify; and the roots of the nymphæa, the capsules of the trapa bicornis, &c.

As regards animals, he has rendered the buffalo as tame as an ox, and he has domesticated insects which seemed impossible to tame. The butterfly of the common silkworm, which we owe to him, and that of the oak silkworm, which he offered to us, but of which we have hitherto been unable to avail ourselves; the wax cochineal, as small and frail as the grub of the rose tree, and during a part of its existence even less visible; he has compelled all these 'children of the air' to furnish him with an annual tribute worth hundreds of millions. This is the daily return which the individual makes to society for the benefit received from it, for all these conquests are but the acts of the individual, the fruits of his patience, observations, studies and taste. The collective force of society must have failed but for him.

To society, belongs the credit of work completed long ago, but to the individual, that of works of art and intelligence. Here we see the respective shares of each—on the one hand, the effacement of the collectivity, whose active ostensible part has now reached its minimum; on the other, the triumph of man over things, and the exaltation of the individual, not over, but in, and through society. I have already alluded to this unique evolution, and I now submit to the reader the circumstantial proofs of it, with the manner in which it was reached.

The Chinaman has other artistic sides to his nature than those relating to the exercise of his particular

calling—that of agriculture, since I am speaking at this moment of the peasant.

Take the village of Ouang-Mo-Khi, and tell me if it is possible to find a more harmonious mingling of nature and human handiwork. Take the house of Ouang-Ming-Tse, and tell me if you do not observe between it and its surrounding, so intimate a relation, that you cannot separate the one from the other. The house stands on the slope of a hill, true to its place and design. The builder made no mistake—it is visible from around, and has a view from it. The house or manor, the worthy, hospitable and peaceful abode of the people we have met, stands in the centre of a small group of five or six cottages, a little smaller than itself, at a distance of a hundred paces from each of them. Its aspect so reflects the character of its owners, that one would be inexpressibly saddened if they were not what they appear to be.

If such a farm were given to me, I would not exchange it for a palace, or for anything in the world but one of its neighbours. Its inhabitants are not uncultivated—the head of the family is a literate, all are fond of books and have read the poets. They adore flowers, and grow them. Everywhere they have discovered a thousand analogies between themselves and animated beings. I shall not mention the one they gave me as a symbol. Nor shall I speak of their study of the stars. They rave about the theatre; you

know that Guignot, Polichinelle, Pierrot and Arlequin came to us from China.[1]

The children are acquainted with fables, whose origin is lost in the mist of ages—*the Cat and Mouse; the Blind Man and the Paralytic; the Two Friends; the Hare and the Tortoise; the Ass in the Lion's Skin: the two Ducks and the Tortoise; the Oyster and the Lawyers;* and so many others.

I see the reader is surprised, but does he think these were invented in Europe? They have also fairies, elves, korigans, &c. Since the world began, humanity has believed in these things; what does it matter if they are Chinese, Indian or European? The same remark applies to their stories. If I had room, I should like to relate one, which curiously resembles the story of Ali-Baba and the Forty Thieves in the *Arabian Nights.* I will narrate one of their legends. I must first explain that the resonance of metals has an extraordinary charm for the Chinese ear. The sound given out by a gong when the instrument is struck in the centre, and the sound waves reach the circumference through the circles of different sizes and formations which the skill of the maker has provided is to them a delicious symphony.

Long after the last vibrations have faded away, they listen for them still, and seem to follow them into the air, where everything, forms and sounds, men and

[1] *Travels of Lord Macartney in China.* See also Deuny's *Social Life in China*, Doolittle, &c.

things, a little sooner or a little later, finish by commingling and disappearing. The sound of bells, more powerful in its effects, evokes in them impressions of the same nature, but of a graver character. When from the summit of the towers from which they look down on earth, they send forth their tones in every direction, to fade slowly away into space, the mind feels a sense of elevation, and in its turn soars above its ordinary thoughts. Disturbed and moved by memories of one knows not what, nor whence derived, it is no longer mere musical harmonies that it yearns to retain, that which disquiets it is the secret of the higher harmonies that it feels to exist between itself and its higher recollections. The Chinese experience these feelings, and, like most people, they have associated bells with the expression of their religious feelings, and have dedicated them to the celebration of their national worship. For the better fulfilment of this end, they cover them with inscriptions in relief or engraved, narrating the annals of their history. The largest and best known are those of Canton and Pekin. There are two in the latter town measuring no less than from 18 to 22 feet in height; they are covered with commemorative inscriptions, and when rung at the great feasts, of the New Year, the Earth, Agriculture, &c., their sound takes a positive sense, and seems the translation into living language of the characters cast in the bronze,—the ancestral voices are heard to speak, and are clearly understood by the

Chinese. Unfortunately, it rarely happens that some superstition is not mingled with the purest and most poetic myths. It is generally believed that a human being or human blood, incorporated with the metal when fused, assures the success of the casting, and gives the bell a clearer and finer tone. Few Chinese, no doubt, are in a condition to explain the mysterious alliance between past and present, of which the blood is the symbol. However that may be, the following legend is founded upon that idea.

The Emperor Yung-Lo, the third of the Ming dynasty, which reigned from 1403 to 1425 of our era, had a passion for bells. He caused five to be founded, the smallest of which weighs 75,000 kilogrammes (75 tons). The tower in which the first was to be erected having been completed, he allotted the casting to a mandarin named Houang-Yu. The first operation was a failure, and a second at an interval of a few months was no more successful. In both instances the casting was full of holes and air-bubbles, and the Emperor in his anger declared that in the event of a third failure, the unfortunate mandarin should lose his head. No doubt it was an idle threat. Yung-Lo was a wise prince. He caused the books on alchemy, which deceived the people, to be destroyed, and he made all who had become bonzes before forty years of age, return to secular life. He was also very fond of letters. There was, therefore, no reason to fear that he would put his threat into execution. But Houang-Yu

might at all events fear disgrace, and in any case his compromised reputation and the failure of his usual skill were sufficient to account for a sadness he made no attempt to disguise. Houang-Yu had a daughter sixteen years old, as lovely as the early flowers of the quince, whom he tenderly loved. Koué, which was her name, noticed his depression, and obtained his confidence.

Thenceforward she thought of nothing but how to console and encourage him, and the idea eventually occurred to her of consulting a famous astrologer, as to the cause of her father's misfortunes, and how they might be avoided in future. The astrologer told her the next casting would be no more successful than the last unless the blood of a virgin were mixed with the alloy. Full of misery but resolute in her devotion, knowing nothing of the Emperor but his threat, Koué returned home, and obtained her father's permission to be present at the casting. The day came, and the following is a description of the catastrophe which ensued.

A silence of death reigned over the assembly at the moment when the fount was opened to allow the metal to pour into its mould. The breathing of all was stopped, and their hearts no longer beat. Suddenly Koué left her place, and threw herself into the hissing and boiling metal, crying out, 'For my father!' A bystander in vain rushed to stop her; he could only seize hold of one of her feet, and retain one of her

slippers in his hands. The father, mad with misery, tried to follow her, but was stopped and taken home, having completely lost his reason. The prophecy of the astrologer was fulfilled. No bell was ever more perfectly cast, but no trace of Koué was ever found; her blood was mingled with the casting. When the bell was first rung, and ever since, each of its deep tones is followed by another plaintive and prolonged note, soft and full of pain, like that of a dying woman, in which the word *tsieh, tsieh,* is clearly heard. Tsieh signifies slipper, and the people, remembering the event, say, 'There is the unfortunate Koué calling for her slipper.'

There are very few Chinese unacquainted with this legend; there is not a house, town, or country in Fokien where they are not ready to tell it. The legends of which the dragon is the subject are even more popular; but it would require a whole book to retail them all, and it is impossible to make a choice.

Which are the more interesting—the legends of the Dragon of Chaldea, of Persia, of Egypt, of Greece, or of the Celts, Normans, and Saxons?

Sometimes it is the Vampire of the Jura, where even now the inhabitants of some of the villages believe that it guards a treasure; or it is the Dragon of the Fleece of Gold. Sometimes it is the wicked dragon which devours human beings, like the Serpent in the coat of arms of the city of Milan, the Dragon of St. George of the Russians or English, the Graoli of Metz, or the

Dragon enemy of the sun and moon, whom the Romans frightened with the sound of trumpets during eclipses, as the Chinese do now-a-days with gongs. Sometimes, on the contrary, it is the good Dragon, the symbol of life among the Hebrews and Gauls, or that of the Divinity whose body, and the carbuncle or globe he carries on his head, represent his attributes.

To enlarge on these would carry me too far. I had, moreover, only a single object in view—to show, by comparing the most poetic myths of humanity with those of the Chinese, that, so far as imagination is concerned, the latter, though essentially and at bottom an agricultural people, yielded in no way to the most highly-gifted peoples. Imagination, art, and poetry have, doubtless, many other aspects besides these I have touched upon, but what I have said suffices for a special study of village people.

We know now the social, economical, and physical conditions of the country to which persons in the position of the Ouang-Ming-Tse owe their prosperity and resources, and we know the general tendency of the life of the peasant under these conditions.

A few words and figures will suffice for what remains to be said, which is scarcely more than the details and proof of his income.

VIII.

The holding of the Ouang-Ming-Tse family consists of 29 mous (4 acres)—11 in the valley, and 18 upon the hill. The former, which are irrigated, are worth 400 francs (£16) a mou; the latter, five only of which are not irrigated, but can be watered by hand, are planted with tea, and their price varies with the age of the plantation. Tea, in fact, is not in full bearing until its fourth year; the first two years count for nothing, and it is usually replanted in the eighth. It is very seldom kept till the tenth; but it depends upon the soil. Of the 13 mous planted with tea, two are worth 210 francs each; three, 360 francs; three, 390 francs; three, 420 francs, and the two last 480 francs—in all, 4890 francs for the land planted with tea, and 10,790 francs (£431) for the whole.

All details of the management of the land, its cultivation, and yield in weight and value for each field and each crop, will be found at the end of the volume. I may repeat here that the Ouang-Ming-Tse, like all Chinese peasants, do not confine themselves to the sale of the produce of their land; they manufacture it as much as possible. If they do not always distil the rice they grow, it is because the manufacture of alcohol is in many places a specially organised industry, and it is more profitable to sell the raw material. There is, however, an exception. They manufacture

their own oil and sugar, they spin their own hemp, cotton, and silk. How should it be otherwise? No one has taught them the beauties of the political economy of the West, they are unacquainted with its sacred principles and the benefits arising from the division of labour. It is true that our steam-presses extract 33 kilogrammes of oil from 100 kilogrammes of rape-seed, while their hand-presses extract only from 25 to 28 at most; but, if Chinese peasants hold wrong views on political economy, they have a better knowledge of social, and, if they are poor manufacturers, they are good cultivators.

For one thing, by confining industry as much as possible to the soil, they retain there the labour, which, if concentrated in large workshops, might fail them at a critical moment, and they avoid the stoppages to which those employed on other than agricultural pursuits are subject; while one hectare of rape under their management produces 2250 kilogrammes of seed, and under ours scarcely 1400 or 1500, so that as they obtain from one hectare 100 kilogrammes of oil more than we can, the final advantage rests with them. It has often been said that agriculture is the first of all industries, but it is only in China, as has been shown, that we can see how exact is the truth of the statement.

This is but one example; we can find another without leaving the Ouang-Ming-Tse. It is in the manufacture of sugar. The whole apparatus required in

China consists of two millstones turned by a buffalo to crush the cane, three boilers in which to boil, thicken, and coagulate the juice, and a furnace consuming straw, while the ingredients are merely some lime to crystallise it, and some eggs to clarify it.

With such primitive means, there is no reason to be surprised at a result of only five per cent. of sugar, although the cane itself is extremely rich in sugar. It is said that that grown in Guadeloupe contains nearly eighteen per cent. after the ground has been worked with chemical manure.

I cannot say what the China cane contains, but I know that in no tropical country that I have visited, have I tasted any which seemed to me so rich. It is therefore probable that the extraction processes I have described, leave a considerable quantity of juice in the residues, which are given as food to animals. In spite of all this one mou yields 230 kilogrammes of sugar of a pale brown colour—that of coffee largely mixed with milk—and the yield of a hectare consequently amounts to about 3400 kilogrammes. In the Antilles and Réunion, an equal surface cultivated on the ordinary method, and covered with farm manure, yields only from 2800 to 3000 kilogrammes.

Here, again, a high state of cultivation largely compensates the imperfection of manufacture, and leaves a larger profit to the peasant, which eventually benefits the soil. The value of the sugar is so low, twenty-five centimes a kilogramme, that China is able to export

large quantities to India and California. In 1861, the quantity exported from the two ports of Canton and Swatow amounted to 270,000 kilogrammes. White sugar is more valuable: thirty-five centimes a kilogramme. It may be asked why the Chinese should not prove as capable in industry as in agriculture. No doubt they might, but it is by no means certain that powerful and expensive steam industries could be reconciled with spade culture, peasant proprietorship, &c. This remains to be proved, and if it were, and the Chinese were converted, the prospect would be threatening indeed for Europe. Either she must succumb in the struggle, or, after having taught China her industrial processes, she would be compelled to learn the economic, social and agricultural processes of the latter. Perhaps the time will come for the consideration of this question. I have already mentioned it, but it is impossible to insist upon it too strongly.

At the same time, there is no immediate cause for alarm; not only are the Chinese difficult to persuade, but the nature of their agriculture, its requirements and profit, form a sort of guarantee against its abandonment.

We may cite as an example, tea, the crop of which has frequently been compared to that of the vine in France. The comparison is a true one, both from the point of view of the profits, and of the circumstances under which they are gained. The tea crops are the vintages of China. The analogy is exact except in one

point. In France the vintages may be destroyed for several years, so that the people, ruined and despairing, often end by renouncing the cultivation of the vine. In China, there are no frosts to destroy the tea crops, and what other dangers exist to it are such as prompt intervention may avert. Cold and damp weather, with languid vegetation, and an unequal leaf-development, injure the quality of the leaves, and consequently lower their price, without counting the loss of time of the labourers engaged for the harvest. Damp and warm weather, which starts the vegetation growth 'like a thunderclap,' is no less to be feared. A general salvage, instead of a crop, has then to be effected, and however numerous the vintages may be, they are not always sufficient to succeed, even under good conditions, while there are never too many of them, especially for the last two of the four crops. These are the most abundant and important not only for China, but for Europe and America. There is no industry which claims and receives greater sacrifices on the part of those engaged in it, and did they refuse to make them, what would become of the peoples of England, Russia, the United States, and of the temperance societies? With what impatience are the first ships awaited in London with the news and first cargoes of the new crop! Five-hundred thousand francs reward to the winner by half a length![1]—while in the other hemisphere all the world

[1] As many as six vessels leaving Fou-Chow at the same hour have arrived on the same day in London.

is in the fields. Men, women, children, old men, youths, and girls, cover the hills, though the sexes are separated. The local population is often insufficient, and people come from the plain and the valley, and from a distance of over four leagues. I stated that the sexes were separated, but they are not entirely so.

The tea fields are small, though generally a little larger than those of Ouang-Ming-Tse, and a word, a look, or a flower are soon exchanged. Sometimes at meals taken in the open air, in the shade of a fine Li-tchi tree, the notes of a guitar are heard, and all listen whilst the songstress sings the Sin Fa. The song finished, they return to their work. Such are the vintages of China, which coincide with the grand work of the rice fields. According to the locality, the people are employed in conveying the last sheafs of corn to a neighbouring space to thresh them out, or labouring on the rice, or beginning the transplantation. The water-wheels are everywhere in motion, the water is chopping, rushing and shining in all directions. Our country is indeed dry, empty and dismal, compared with this.

Nowhere in China would it be possible for a rich man to take possession of a spring, and convey its water to his pond by subterranean drains, leaving dry the fields under which they pass. Water is as indispensable to life, as sun, air, and land. No individual has the right to say, It is mine. It belongs to all. This feeling is very deeply rooted in China. The field

ranger, who is entrusted by the council of the syndicate of peasants with the duty of distributing the water in the irrigation canals, never has the smallest fault to find; and the council, which would take cognizance of such a fault if committed, has really but one duty, that of the maintenance of the canals, to which each person contributes two centimes per mou. Suddenly a gong is heard, and a procession is seen on the sloping path of the hill; after the gong come the criers, and after them the mace-bearers, the hands of justice, the fans, parasol and dais of a mandarin. It is the prefect or sub-prefect of the nearest town. All the peasants run and welcome him, and he, standing on an eminence, speaks to them of the earth, the common mother of the human race, and of the worship they owe to her. He speaks to them of rice, wheat, maize, sorgho, and millet, in one word of grain, the symbol of peace and union among men. He then bestows rewards of merit upon any that may have been pointed out to him as deserving. These rewards are large pieces of silk inscribed with the names of the laureates and their praises; they are hung in the principal room of the house, and are the honour of the family. The mandarin departs, and the peasants fix upon a day on which to feast their fortunate friends, and conduct them in great state to the pagoda of the patron saint of the peasants, *The Patron of the Five Grains*, who is the same for all China. The tea-planters also have a special patron, and, after the third crop is gathered, a

banquet is prepared in the courts and galleries of the pagoda which he inhabits, and sometimes also in the streets if the interior is insufficient. The tables and walls are covered with garlands, vases of flowers, and the fruits of the season. Then all pass in procession before his statue, and offer him a cup of the new tea, and the feast, like all in China, ends with a theatrical performance and festivities.

I must beg forgiveness for this long digression on the tea crop. Its attraction adds another motive to those which it seems to me will always prevent the Chinese from forgetting their duty to the soil; no bond could be stronger than that it forms when joined to wealth and health. While relegating to their proper place in the Appendix the details of cultivation, I may add here a short *résumé* of the general results.

The valley land yields 1971 francs, the tea plantation 3033 francs, and the other hill crops 1365 francs, or a gross total of 6369 (£254 15*s.* 10*d.*).

But as the franc is not a common measure of value for Europe and China, it will be better to state the weight of the crops; they are, rice 9910 kilogrammes, wheat 2100, tea 1604, broad beans 300, maize 160, oil 291, buckwheat 180, sugar 230, tobacco 180, yams 5000, turnips 9600, cabbages 15,000, clover 9720, oilcake 1095, forage in the form of twigs and leaves of sorgho, soia and sugar-cane 1200, and 15,000 kilogrammes of straw from rice, wheat, maize, broadbeans, buckwheat, &c., which I have not included in the

money valuation, a certain quantity of vegetables and fruit, and sixty pieces of cotton.[1] The whole is grown on an area of 1 hectare 94 ares.

It may perhaps occur to the reader, on comparing the results of the different cultivations, to inquire why Ouang-Ming-Tse did not exclusively select the more advantageous, such as tea and yams, abandoning the others. To this Ouang-Ming-Tse would first reply, that the best method of keeping up the value of an article, is not to throw too much of it upon the market, and consequently only to grow a small quantity; and he would add that a variety of crops, by ensuring the full employment of his time from one end of the year to another, and the majority of his crops against any misfortunes, either from the season or from the market, is more advantageous than the production of sometimes one article, sometimes another, which would necessitate the change and renewal of his material and instruments from year to year; and he would quote the proverb, better understood in China than in Europe, 'that it is unwise to put all the eggs in one basket.'

He might perhaps add that it would be neither good nor just, nor humane, nor even profitable to bring about competition between neighbours and friends, and disturb a system of cultivation which has been the work of centuries, and to which all the world is accustomed.

The produce of the fields is not the only income

[1] The kilogramme is 2 lbs. 3¼ ozs. avoirdupois.

of the Ouang family: the stable, pigsties, and fowl-yards, add a sum of 773 francs (nearly £27).

The total receipts of the family from all sources amount to 7142 francs (£285 14*s.* 2*d.*).

We now come to its expenses.

IX.

The first of these is the tax, nearly the whole of which is levied upon the plain and valley lands. Those which are, or can be made, into rice fields, that is to say, irrigable land, whether actually irrigated or not, pay more than non-irrigable. If cultivated in rice, the tax is levied partly in kind, and partly in money.[1]

Nowhere is the tax higher than 1 franc 13 centimes per mou, and it is always levied on the first crop; but if this be poor, a remission of taxation is often made by the Government, although succeeding crops may be good. For eleven mous on the level, Ouang-Ming-Tse pays 12 francs 65 centimes; the tax on hill-land is very small, scarcely 5 centimes per mou; the whole amounts to 13 francs 65 centimes (11*s.* 4½*d.*). The wear and tear of the necessary instruments for grinding and preparing the grain and tea, the looms

[1] In the north, where wheat, millet, and maize are cultivated instead of rice, the tax is also levied partly in kind and partly in money.

for spinning and weaving, the mills for the preparation of oil and sugar, &c., taken at 10 per cent. on a value of 578 francs, amounts to 58 francs (£2 7*s.* 6*d.*).

Of seed corn 130 kilogrammes of rice are required for 26 mous at 5 kilogrammes per mou, costing at 8 francs per 60 kilogrammes, 17 francs; 70 kilogrammes of wheat are required for 14 mous at 5 kilogrammes per mou, costing, at 8 francs per 60 kilogrammes, 9 francs. The remainder needs no detail, and does not amount to more than 20 francs, making a total of 46 francs.

In regard to manures it should be remarked that all plants are not equally exacting. Some kinds from which only leaves are required—such as sorgho, and soiâ grown for forage; tobacco and cabbages—require 800 kilogrammes of manure per mou; grain-producing plants require less manure, but certain additional ingredients, such as ashes, lime, and the ooze from the canals, are necessary. Sugar-cane, for instance, requires 800 kilogrammes of manure, and 300 of ashes per mou. Maize, buckwheat, and peas require only 500 kilogrammes of manure and 150 of ashes; cotton, 300 of manure, wheat 200, rice 600, with 150 of ashes. Ouang-Ming-Tse estimates his total annual expenditure of manure on all crops at 30,000 kilogrammes; of ashes, at 10,000 kilogrammes.

But as neither the manures nor ashes produced in the house have been reckoned among the receipts, they should not either be reckoned among the outgoings.

A deduction must therefore be made of 10,000 kilogrammes of the first, derived from the personalty of the house, and from the animals, and of 5000 kilogrammes of cinders obtained from the different fireplaces or manufactured from all kinds of rubbish, such as rags, bones of animals, reduced to ashes in closed receptacles. The difference, that is to say, 20,000 kilogrammes of manure and 5000 of ashes, costs 5 francs per 600 kilogrammes for the former, amounting to 166 francs, and 12 francs for the latter, amounting to 60 francs, or a total of 226 francs. Boats specially constructed for the purpose bring these cargoes from the neighbouring towns, and even from Foo-chow.

Two field labourers are required at an annual wage of 100 francs each, a female servant at a wage of 40 francs, and sixty days' labour of men, women and children, at an average wage of 25 centimes each, amounting to 15 francs, or a total of 225 francs (£9), without, of course, reckoning the labour of the family and the assistance of the neighbours, whom the Ouang help in their turn.

The principal cost of food, the details of which will be found in the Appendix, amounts to 1589 francs (£63 11*s.* 8*d.*).

This sum, divided among the fourteen inhabitants of the house, gives an average for each of 116 francs, including besides wine, sugar, salt, tea, fat, oil, and kitchen fuel, a daily ration of 1·071 kilogramme of rice, wheat, and dried vegetables, 227 grammes of meat

or fish, 245 grammes of fresh or salt vegetables and mushrooms, making a total ration of 1 kilogramme 543 grammes. I must not omit to state on the one hand that the family includes old people and children, and on the other that it supplies sixty days' food to the extra labourers. I say nothing of its frequent hospitality. In an average year in the provinces of the interior these expenses would not average more than 100 francs per head.

The cost of feeding the animals amounts to 552 francs 20 centimes (£22 1*s.* 10*d.*). There are two matters I have omitted to mention. One relates to the preparation of tea: except the first crop called *the shoots*, which is dried by simple exposure to the air, the other qualities are submitted to a slight heating process. In a good year 18 kilogrammes of charcoal are required for 48 kilogrammes of leaves, and as Ouang-Ming-Tse gathers 1546 kilogrammes, he required 576 kilogrammes of wood charcoal at 6 francs per 60 kilogrammes: 57 francs (£2 5*s.* 10*d.*). The other matter is the cost of 12 young pigs sold fat three months later; it amounts to 55 francs (£2 4*s.* 2*d.*).

There is a last item of expenditure, the cost of maintenance and repairs to the farm and homestead buildings. The house of the Ouang-Ming-Tse consists of three buildings, of which the central connects the others like the bar of the letter H. The house is situated in a walled court. It has often been remarked in Europe that among other singular customs the

Chinese commence their houses by the roof. It is true, and for this reason. The walls are constructed of bricks placed on the level, like those built by children with dominoes. The lower partitions are half filled with ashlar to give solidity to the walls, but the latter remain so light that if they do not require foundations they are incapable of supporting the roof. They rest on large flagstones lying on well-beaten ground. This method of construction has two advantages: it is cheap and prevents damp rising into the walls of the house. The roof is supported by wooden poles resting in their turn upon stones, each of which has a foundation of three or four feet in depth. The roof is the first task undertaken, in order not to endanger the walls, either by the ditches necessary for the foundations, or by possible accident when placing the framework in position. Each building is in five divisions, 8 metres in length by 5 in breadth. The divisions are separated by hollow bricks, through which bamboos are passed, the ends of the latter being fitted into grooves in the wooden uprights, the partitions being thus made both light and strong.

The exterior measurement of the building is 33 metres in length, and about the same in depth. It faces north and south, for reasons which will be explained later. The windows and doors of each building are on one side only, that looking into the court, and as much as possible on the south. The windows are not pierced in the wall, as with us. The wall

comes only to the height of the sill, the remainder of the space being filled with wooden panels and with the doors and windows, the latter not being glazed, but fitted with thinned oyster-shells or a special kind of paper. The roof is so lengthened round the court as to form a verandah, under which the inhabitants pass the greater portion of the day.

As I have described it, the house of Ouang-Ming-Tse is worth 3200 francs (£128). The cost of maintenance and repairs is 150 francs (£6) annually. Summing up the different heads of expenditure, we have 13 francs 65 centimes for taxes; 58 francs for wear and tear of the agricultural implements; 146 francs for seed corn; 226 francs for manures; 255 francs for labour; 1589 francs for food for the household; 552 francs for that of the live stock; 57 francs for the charcoal required for drying the tea; 55 francs for the purchase of young pigs, and 150 francs for repairs to the house, the whole amounting to 2988 francs (£119 10*s.* 10*d.*), which, deducted from receipts amounting to 7142 francs (£285 14*s.* 2*d.*), leaves profits amounting to 4141 francs (£165 3*s.* 4*d.*).

And the furniture, what about that, and the maintenance of the wardrobe?

Patience, good reader.

X.

The reader must not suppose it was easy to obtain leave to visit the private apartments of the family to make an inventory of the beds, wardrobes, &c. It is a thing never asked in France, and still less in China. The doors of the living-rooms, warehouses, and cart-sheds had been freely opened to me, but my eyes had never crossed the thresholds of the others, and I hesitated to speak of my wishes. I was obliged to do so, however. 'I will ask my grandmother,' replied Ouang-Ming-Tse. No doubt the period of the assembly of the council of ministers, over which that venerable lady presided, was selected for the consideration of so grave a request; perhaps some little time was required for preparation; but it was not until three days had elapsed that Madame Ouang, in her capacity of delegate of the department of the interior, informed me that the smaller rooms were open to me. We commenced the inspection at once. All the rooms led from one into the other, even the kitchen; and during all the time it lasted I fancied myself in the house of some wealthy Lorraine countryman, about to marry one of his children. The planks, where not covered with mats, absolutely shone; the wardrobes, the doors of which were but half closed, left well-furnished shelves open to view. But I must not anticipate.

The house, as I have stated, faces north and south,

and is open on this side; it is thence that come the winds most favourable to health. This, however, is not the only reason for such a form of construction.

The *Fung-Shui* is constructed. It will be asked what the Fung-Shui is. Volumes have been written without explaining it, and I confess I can add very little to make it clearer. It may be most clearly explained as a system of geomancy resulting from empirical observations, founded upon the topographical conditions most favourable to the choice of land destined for a house or tomb. If these conditions be observed the prospects of happiness are favourable; and if, on the contrary, a series of mischances should occur, it will be because they have been disregarded. For example, the wind known as *Fung*, blowing from certain directions, must not be interfered with in its course by obstacles such as a hill or eminence of any kind, while such interposition should be opposed to other winds of evil influence. Nor must flowing water, known as *Shui*, run parallel with the front of a house, within a certain distance from it. If the situation and topography of the land, plain, valley, or hill be unfavourable, the inhabitants erect a tower, the height of which is determined on certain fixed principles, to avert unfavourable winds.

The foregoing are some of the conditions of Fung-Shui, but there are many others, which as a whole constitute a sort of science taken advantage of by the individuals who specially devote themselves to it, and

who are invariably consulted. It may be childishness and superstition. Ouang-Ming-Tse, who is no fool, conforms his actions to these beliefs, and seems to share them.

The large folding door opening into the court is always open during the day, but a large moveable wooden screen is so placed inside as to conceal the interior from view. The court, which is kept very clean, is paved with large pieces of granite. The verandah, used during the greater portion of the day, is furnished with chairs, two tables of varnished wood, and a loom.

The pillars which support the verandah, and all the wood-work, inside and outside—doors, windows, and panels—are varnished of a handsome red-brown colour. The middle building, higher than the others, contains the living room, which is used as a hall of ancestors on the occasion of anniversaries. On the right is the room of the grandmother, and that of the eldest daughter of Po-Y, who is always ready to attend upon her grandmother. On the left is the room of Ouang-Ming-Tse and Madame Ouang, and that of the other two young girls. In the left wing of the house is the room of Po-Y and his wife, with the small bed of the last child, while the three sons sleep in the second. The right wing is used by Po-Sen and his young wife. It is empty now, even the furniture having been taken away; it will be replaced on the marriage of the eldest son. The two summer-houses

at the back are used as warehouses, and contain a press and tools, with the kitchen and the room of the female servant. The two workmen return home after their day's work.

Immediately facing the entrance, against the wall at the bottom of the room, is a long shelf, on which rest two perfume stands, two large Chinese vases, two tin torches, some flowers in vases and plants in pots. Above the shelf hangs, like a bracket, a kind of credence usually closed, which contains the ancestral tablets. On either side are pendants of fine red paper, covered with Chinese character, verses and moral precepts and maxims; and at the back of the shelf is a platform a step higher, with a canopy ornamented with rattan. Against the wall on the left rests a trunk containing the family archives, and on the right a small library, both flanked by pendants representing country scenes or flowers. In the centre of the room, in a line with each side of the canopy, are two sofas separated by a round table, and a large special table between the sofas. All are made of black wood. Against the wall, and wherever there is room, stand common chairs of varnished wood. There is a large mat under foot. This furniture and that of the bedrooms are worth 1844 francs (£73 15*s.* 10*d.*). On entering the kitchen the eye is at once attracted by a large coloured print, representing two old people in a sitting posture, a man and a woman. They are the patrons of the kitchen, or the genii of the hearth, which is essentially that of

the kitchen, by which every house is commenced. The genii of the hearth in popular belief protect the house and govern the existence of the members of the family. In the evening of the 23rd day of the last month of the year they leave the earth, and return to Heaven to render an account to the Supreme Ruler of the conduct of those under their charge, and they do not return to their duty until the night of the 1st day of the new year. This belief is as widely spread as the fable of St. Nicholas in Europe. During their absence, the old print is replaced and everything is cleaned and put in order, the fires being extinguished at the end. Then on the morning of the first day, preparation is made to welcome their return, which takes place towards two o'clock. Many persons remain awake to await them. A new fire is lighted and the first meal of the year is prepared, care being taken to offer it to them before it is eaten. Just as at Christmas and earlier in Europe, the good genii of the hearth bring a number of presents to Chinese children, which, as may be imagined, the latter await with as much pleasure as ours. The furniture of the kitchen and the servant's room is worth 381 francs, which with the 1884 francs already mentioned makes a total of 2225 francs (£89), giving at 10 per cent. a deduction of 222 francs for wear and tear to be made from the net profit of 4141 francs, leaving 3919 francs (£156 15*s*. 10*d*.). There remain the clothes and other personal belongings.

XI.

'Madame Ouang,' said I to the wife of my friend, 'if the compliments of a man little learned in domestic matters have any value in your eyes, I pray you to accept them. I have never seen a house better kept than yours!'

Madame Ouang answered me with a smile which let me see that in China, as elsewhere, the mistress of a house is not insensible to a compliment of this kind. 'But,' added I, 'I have noticed in the cupboards' (here Madame Ouang sent me a side look) 'a number of things of which I should like to know the use. There were, for instance——' 'Say plainly, Si Lao Yé, that you wish to complete your inventory.' 'You have guessed it, Ouang-Lai-Lai.' 'Well, Si Lao Yé, we will ask my grandmother.' Madame Ouang then went away. The old lady came in. 'My daughter tells me, Si Lao Yé, that you wish to see the contents of our cupboard.' 'Yes, madame, if it does not cause you too much inconvenience.' 'There is no reason against it but the trouble it will cause the children, and I do not think they can refuse you anything.' She struck the ground with her stick, and everyone came running. 'Here,' said she, 'is Si Lao Yé, who interests himself in all connected with us, and I am sure you will do what he asks.' Then Madame Ouang explained my wishes. Madame Po-Y began to laugh, and Sin-Lien did the same. The two little girls followed their example, the

boys also, and even the little one was quickly affected by the contagion. 'So you want to see our treasures, Si Lao Yé.' 'If you are good enough to show them, Madame Po.'

'So you want to see our dresses, Si Lao Yé.' 'With your permission, Mademoiselle Sin-Lien.' 'Really, Si Lao Yé, you wish——' "Yes, little ugly one.'[1] 'What, Si Lao Yé!' 'Be off with you, little rogue!'

All ran away laughing like mad people. The verandah was swept out, and they all came back with the contents of the cupboards and chests. At first they were spread upon the floor, but as the space became filled the little ones placed their loads upon my feet, knees, shoulders, and head. I was covered with clothes like a travelling pedlar. The load gave them an idea, and they took back the parcels, arranged them in a circle, and little Hong-Yu, standing in the centre, began selling them by auction All made bids which Ouang-Ming-Tse, Po-Y, or one of the ladies, corrected. An inventory of the clothes was thus made amidst jokes of all kinds, and the incessant laughter of the children, great and small, including the latter. It is needless to say that my dignity suffered greatly, but it was most amusing.

The details would be too long to go into here, but they will be found in the Appendix. The net results were, for the clothing of the men, 1152 francs, for the women 1527 francs 60 centimes (total, £107 3*s.* 10*d.*).

[1] Onkiao, a nickname of one of the little girls, who, by the way was very pretty.

Deducting from this sum 462 francs for watches and jewellery, and assuming that the cheaper garments are those most quickly worn out, we may allot a sum of 500 francs, a quarter of its value, for the maintenance of clothing, which will further diminish our net profits to 3419 francs (£132 15*s.* 10*d.*).

Ouang-Ming-Tse himself carries out the education of his children, who are joined by those of some of the neighbours during school hours, and there is, therefore, no expenditure under this head. Ouang-Ming-Tse even teaches drawing to his pupils.

The chapter of extraordinary expenses is a very interesting one; the health, pleasures and religious belief of a man, family or people, form the best possible criterion by which to judge of their physical, moral and intellectual condition.

Remembering the proverb '*Mens sana in corpore sano*,' the first question is that of the cost of sickness. There has been none since the illness of Sin-Lien, and for fourteen years no help but that of a midwife on the occasion of the birth of infants has been required. 'So you have no enemy?' I remarked to Ouang-Ming-Tse. 'What do you mean, Si Lao Yé?' 'If popular belief is to be credited, the greater number of illnesses originate in the hatred of others.'

'The master did not say that, Si Lao Yé; he said that humanity is one man able to resist illness if strongly constituted, insensible to heat and cold and to all foreign pernicious influences, if all the organs are

healthy. If harmony ever reigns over humanity, as it should, sickness will have no more power. Physical evil is the consequence of moral evil, of the injustice and hatred which divide humanity. That is the saying of Confucius.' I thought that Confucius might be in the right, but I thought also that the kind of occupation to which Ouang-Ming-Tse and his family devoted themselves, was not without its good effect on their health.

There is no stronger stimulus to activity and muscular development than work in the fields; this is a fact known to all the world, but agriculture may perhaps ordinarily be reproached with a tendency to favour the muscles at the expense of the brain. This cannot be alleged of spade culture. The very multiplicity of its operations requires an increased expenditure of cerebral activity; nor is it merely a sustained exercise, it is a varied one— every plant has its different requirements. When one among many is sickly, the cause must be searched for. It may be an insect, it may be anæmia. The man has to seek out the cause, and in applying the remedy, saves not only the plant, but himself, by preserving the indispensable equilibrium of his functions, without which the human organism deteriorates and becomes subject to all kinds of diseases. Nervous diseases are very rare in China, and never met with except in the case of opium-smokers.

I have spoken only of the operations immediately resulting from spade culture, but the manufacturing

industries proceeding from it afford another opening for brain activity. If there is one point on which all travellers are agreed, it is upon the general intelligence of the Chinese and their aptitude for all tasks, and the explanation of this remarkable fact is to be found in the system of spade culture. It has been previously remarked that man best cultivates and improves his own condition in cultivating and improving the soil.

The religion of the Ouang-Ming-Tse is very complicated. The reader who remembers the chapter on labour knows that nowhere is so large a number of religions professed by one individual as in China. There is, first, the great religion of progress by means of labour, founded on the unity of Heaven, man and earth, the worship of which is the symbolisation of these ideas. It is rather a philosophical system than a religion; derived from it we have ancestral worship, which is the special application of the same principles to each family. These primary and fundamental religions admit of a sufficiently large number of festivals and solemnities, which are so many holidays. Without taking into consideration those celebrated at the solstices and equinoxes, at the anniversaries of ancestors, of Confucius and other great men, or the monthly and bi-monthly meetings of the family, which are intended to stimulate all the purity and truth of religious sentiment, it may be said that each month of the year is marked by a festival or rejoicing, more or less intimately connected with religion. For example, in the

first month of the year there are, besides the special religious, civil and domestic ceremonies of the new year, processions in honour of Spring, the Celestial Dragon, and the Night of Lanterns. In the second month is the Festival of Tombs, in the third that of the Domestic Genius, in the fourth that of Infancy, in the fifth that of the Dragon of the Waters, in the sixth that of the Stars of the Milky Way, which is also the Festival of Women; then there are the Festivals of the Moon, Old Age, the Pagodas, thanksgivings after the harvests, &c., &c. I have mentioned only a few; a volume would be necessary to describe the most interesting. To the above must be added the festivals of the patron saints of trades and corporations, certain anniversaries celebrated by the literati, &c. No people, in short, has so many days dedicated, in one form or another, to the recollection and consolidation of its unity. In these great manifestations there are neither classes, castes, ranks, nor distinction of belief; no one is excluded, and an inquiry into their symbolical meaning shows clearly that underlying them are the idea and feeling of universal humanity.

After these festivals come the practice of inferior religions, which are merely the expressions of private belief, and tending rather to disunion than union, of which I have given an account in a preceding chapter, and which I need not repeat here. Ouang-Ming-Tse and his family are regarded as Buddhists, but they are not more so in reality than a large number of Europeans

are Catholics or Protestants. They invariably contribute their quota towards the expenses of the pagodas, as they do to all of a similar nature. However that may be, these expenses, with those arising from ancestral worship and the great national solemnities, do not amount to a high figure per head when spread throughout the population of Ouang-Mo-Khi. A Protestant missionary, the Rev. Mr. Yates, estimates them at from 3 to 4 francs annually per head in all China. So far as the Ouang-Ming-Tse are concerned, this estimate is nearly correct, and we may allot a sum of 50 francs (£2) as its annual expenditure under this head. The theatre and pleasure parties are more expensive—200 francs (£8)—but this sum includes hospitality to friends, and a share of public banquets, and representations given by actors at the public expense. Repairs to bridges, paths, pagodas, or rather places of public resort, cost a voluntary subscription of 30 francs (£1 4*s.* 2*d.*).[1]

Under these heads, therefore, an additional deduction of 280 francs must be made from the sum of 3419 francs already referred to, leaving a definite net profit of 3139 francs (£125 11*s.* 8*d.*). The reader will doubtless have remarked that no mention has been made of interest upon the value of the property, although no account could be held to be complete in Europe without such a deduction. A different opinion is held in China, where investments are no more recognised than

[1] The maintenance of the canals is otherwise provided for.

fundholders. Capital is there regarded as being valuable only for what it produces, and loans are considered as a share with limited responsibility in a common undertaking. This is the reason for interest being so high, or rather, so optional, and for the law and creditors being so indulgent to unfortunate debtors. Loans are also made at short dates only, and on account of the high rate of interest the borrower is more desirous to repay than the creditor to receive.

A fundholder, therefore, living upon invested capital would be something extraordinary. In a word, capital, tools, land and money, have no value except for those who can use them. No Chinaman would attribute to himself a power of production, or consider himself at the same time borrower and lender, master and slave of capital.

For this reason, Ouang-Ming-Tse refused to separate pretended interests from net profits. 'What could I do with my money?' said he. 'There is no national debt here, and no borrowers who would use it on my account. I must use it myself, or have children to help me. Owing to the vicissitudes of my life, I could not have many, but Po-Y, who has six already, will, I hope, have others, and in the meanwhile we entrust to one of my brothers, a merchant at Foo-chow, what money we cannot use ourselves. He uses it in his business, in which we share. We shall soon require a part of it again, as Sin-Lien is going to marry, and my eldest grandson will soon do the same, and we must think of extending our cultivation.

'I know that we may thus be said to become creditors and debtors of one another, but in truth we each work for the other, and when I am obliged to rest through age, my children in their turn will labour for me. Shall not I have begun by labouring for them? Can anything be more just?' 'And more simple, Ouang-Sien-Sen, and more grateful?'

XII.

Day with the Ouang-Ming-Tse begins at sunrise. Po-Y is the first to rise; he arouses the elder children and the servants, then returns to his room. A few moments later three blows upon the plank are heard in his room and that of his father, and the children make ready to attend upon them, but before entering they await another signal. They then salute their parents, offer them tea, and render them such help in their toilette as they may require.[1] Husband and wife then salute each other and the day has begun.

The first meal, which is taken immediately, consists of rice, cabbage, or other salt vegetable, small fish and prawns salted, with a portion of cheese made of peas moistened with a sauce made from barley and beans.[2] Tea is taken at the end of the meal, not during its progress.

The second meal takes place at midday and is much

[1] Kisses are not usual between parents and children.

[2] This is the sauce called *soy*, which is now well-known in Europe.

the same as that of the morning, except that the vegetables are fresh, and cooked with fat or oil obtained from peas, and that more is taken. The third meal, which is taken towards four o'clock, is more varied in character—vermicelli made from peas cooked in fat, and wheaten or rice cakes are added to the repast.

The fourth and last meal is taken at seven o'clock; it resembles that of midday, with the addition of a small quantity of wine. Side dishes composed of varec, seaweed, mushrooms, pulp, &c., are served with each meal. Varec is sometimes served up as a dish by itself. Fruit is served according to season.

In summer, a fifth meal is taken at nine o'clock, between the first and that at midday, when a soup of polenta made from wheat corn is taken. At the midday and evening meals pork and duck are eaten, and the quantity of wine is increased. On occasions of festival better food is given, more meat, pastry, fruit, and jams. Masters and servants partake of the same food at the same time, but at separate tables.

After meals each goes to his own occupation.

The women, except in certain provinces or rather districts, do not work in the fields, and at Ouang Mo-Khi they do not leave the house or garden except perhaps at the time of the tea crop. Their duties are none the less very heavy; they take their share with the men in drying and husking the grain, bleaching and grinding the rice, &c. An idea of the time required for these operations may be gathered from the fact that

to dry properly 915 kilogrammes of rice, or to husk 183 kilogrammes, is a long day's work. The women make all the dry, salt, and sweet preserves, and they attend to the kitchen, the washing of the linen, and the cleanliness of the house. The care of the pigsties and fowl-yard also forms part of their duty. All is attended to equally by the two ladies and the young girls, assisted only by the female servant, and the men, when the latter have completed their out-door labours. Lastly, the looms for picking the cotton, for spinning and weaving, are always ready for the one or the other; while the young girls have in addition the minor labours of their sex, such as sewing, embroidery, &c. They sell the results, keeping the money obtained for themselves. Part of the clothes is also made by the women.

As regards the men, if they have no outdoor or indoor employment to occupy them during the long winter evenings, they spend their time in making the straw or cord slippers so largely used among them, and fishing-nets, the price of which they retain for themselves. Ouang and his wife jointly administer the affairs of the house, one the outdoor, the other the indoor, and Madame Ouang also manages the expenditure and takes charge of the common purse. But above them all reigns the aged grandmother, whose powers have only been exercised by her son and daughter-in-law for two years. She, at all events, nominally exercised them in 1865. The day she parted with them

was her ninetieth birthday. The house was full of neighbours, relations and friends, who had come even from Foo-chow to present their congratulations, when she selected the occasion to announce her intentions. Since then she has no occupation, but she is not forgotten; all devote themselves to her, and seek to soothe with their care the melancholy of her declining years.

She was still living in 1869, when, before quitting China, I went to take leave of the family which had received and treated me so kindly. Three years bring many changes among old people and children, and I found the aged lady much broken, but she had not had a single day of illness. Ouang-Ming-Tse, Po-Y, and their wives were well. Sin-Lien had left the house some time before; she was married and had two children. A-Pé, the oldest son, was married and the father of a fine boy, which he presented to me. The others had grown considerably: Tchen, the second, was almost a man. Little *Ugly* and little *Baby* were grown-up young ladies, and impudent little Asen had become so timid that he did not seem to recognise me, but he had a younger brother ten months old whose large eyes seemed to look upon me with little respect enough.

The property had also changed. It had been increased by ten mous, which necessitated another labourer, whose place will however soon be taken by Tchen.

I passed many pleasant hours with these kind people,

and have many happy recollections of them, but every time the remembrance of them crosses my mind, it is accompanied by saddening thoughts. Why should they possess so much comfort, quiet and happiness, while we are oppressed with insecurity, instability and misery?

It may be said that the Ouang have a precious auxiliary in the tea cultivation, but in France we have the vine, the mulberry, the olive, beetroot, tobacco and other plants, which, duly cultivated, might equal tea in value. We have also madder, which, properly attended to, might perhaps compete with industrial products.

It may be said that the Ouang live in a country which produces five crops annually. That is true, but fourteen souls live upon less than two hectares, and even if it were proved that our climate admits of only one harvest, the population should amount to 70,000,000. Why is it only half that? And why is there only one harvest—the gardeners make more? With two, France should support 140,000,000 souls.

Other objections may be made: the moderation of Chinese taxes compared to our own heavy budgets, and the privileges which the isolated situation of China confers upon her, both in view of foreign war, from which she has been able to protect herself, and of foreign competition, against which her geographical position protects her.

The whole of this book has been a reply to these reasons. There should be no mistake; if the modera-

tion of the tax is one of the causes of Chinese prosperity, it is not the only one, and is far from being the most direct. The prosperity in question is really nothing but the outcome of its institutions, and in the first place, by its system of taxation and property. It is owing to this system, striking as it does at the root of sterility, laziness and death, that all the land is cultivated, the population developed, and that production, stimulated by an unexampled internal demand, has attained proportions of which the success of the Ouang-Ming-Tse family is by no means one of the most remarkable specimens. It is owing to this system that the farmer, relieved from the continually increasing requirements of a parasite rent, himself becomes an owner, the strongest possible encouragement to labour and production. It is, in short, owing to this system that all the forces both of man and nature have been aroused and united for life.

Spread over the population, the tax amounts scarcely to 3 francs per head, and at the utmost to 5 francs per hectare. Hill land, however, pays only 75 centimes, while it is as productive as the rest. It could not be very difficult for the Chinese Government to obtain one or two francs more per hectare, especially on the plain land, and peasants like Ouang-Ming-Tse, realising net profits of 3000 francs upon less than two hectares, would consent easily to such an increase. The Chinese Government does not seem to have contemplated such an increase, perhaps partly because of its respect for

the rights of labour, partly because of its repugnance to meddle in any way with the ancient institutions, partly, in short, because it has hitherto regarded as accidents, the obligations which its new relations with Europe are about to create for it. It has preferred, whenever extraordinary expenses have been forced upon it, to have recourse to exceptional and temporary taxation upon the rich, and particularly upon industries not taxed as yet. But whenever it recognises the permanence of such necessities, and the literati and people perceive them to be unavoidable, it will be by no means impossible to increase the revenue by two or three hundred millions, since that presupposes an increase of only forty or fifty centimes per inhabitant in localities like Ouang-Mo-Khi.

It is therefore a mistake to suppose that the institutions of China would have necessarily been different in a different geographical situation, or that it would be possible for them to change under European influence. It is they, on the contrary, which place her in a position to deal with all requirements.

Regarding foreign, commercial, and industrial competition, it is not the isolation of China, which is less than is popularly supposed, which constitutes her protection, but the abundance, variety and cheapness of her products and the density of her population. These form a better protection than custom-houses, even against armed attempts. China is enabled to dispense with European commodities because she is a plentiful

country, full of men, and of produce; her institutions are an additional safeguard, especially her system of taxation and property. The question I asked myself just now, remains unanswered—Why should France not contain 70,000,000 of inhabitants; why should she not some day contain 140,000,000?

There is no definite difference between Europeans and Chinese. The principle on which Chinese civilisation rests, is the same as that of all other great civilisations, or of the religions which gave birth to them.

Whether it be principle or dogma, is it not always solidarity and unity?

The only difference is that the Chinese have given it a wider range, and have subordinated to it the whole of their law.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

DETAILS AND RETURNS OF CULTIVATION.

In the valleys, rice is the principal plant cultivated, and to which all the soil is devoted. There are two harvests. The first of ordinary rice, which is transplanted in May and cut in the beginning of July, yields 380 kilos. to the mow. The second rice for distilling, is transplanted in July and cut in October. It yields a little more than the preceding, viz., 400 kilos., but it is sold somewhat cheaper. For the 11 mows, Ouang-Ming-Tse consequently obtains of the one crop 4180 kilos. at 8 francs a picul, of 60 kilos.,[1] and of the second, 4400 kilos., at 7 francs; or a total of 1070 francs in round numbers for the two harvests; to which must be added 60 francs as the value of the 6500 kilos. of straw.

When the rice is removed, tillage is speedily given to the plough; and having divided the ground into four equal fields, the seed is sown in lines and in patches, separated with due regard to the future development of the plants; turnips in one, broad-beans in another, cabbages in the third, and rape-seed in the last. Ten or twelve days after this operation, other rows of clover or

[1] This is a high price, which is explained by proximity to the sea; in the interior it does not exceed 6 or 7 francs.

of lupine are inserted in these seed or transplanting-plots, also sown in patches. No seed, it should be borne in mind, is sown without having been crisped and without having germinated.

The turnips, a very large kind, yield 2600 kilos., at 1 franc the 60 kilos. per mow, or for the $2\frac{3}{4}$ of the field, 110 francs. The broad-beans yield 120 kilos., at 11 francs for 60 kilos.—that is, for the whole field, 525 kilos., or 60 francs. The cabbages, 4000 kilos. at 95 c. for 60 kilos. —that is, for the whole field, 11,000 kilos. Finally, the hemp-seed gives per mow 150 kilos., or, for the entire field, 418 kilos. of seed, which furnish 104 kilos. of oil, at the rate of 22 francs for 60 kilos., or 38 francs. There are, moreover, 310 kilos. of oil-cake, which is sold for manure for the land and food for cattle at the rate of 8 francs 50 c. for 60 kilos. This 43 francs added to the 38 francs for the oil, give a total of 81 francs for the field of hemp-seed. Thus all the crops of this third harvest amount to 435 francs.

The main destination of the clover is to be buried as green manure—very suitable to air the ground. Nevertheless a good part is dried for the consumption of cattle, carefully selected and preserved in salt; the ends of the shoots make an excellent vegetable. Estimating the whole as if it had been dried, the clover yields 540 kilos. the mow—that is, for the whole surface, 5940 kilos., worth 120 francs, to which must be added 5 francs' worth of grain—in all, 125 francs.

Although they are not transplanted the same day, all these plants mature at the same time, in such a manner that they never require excessive toil, or indeed more labour than that of the family and the ordinary assistants. The cabbages and turnips, for example, can remain indefinitely on the soil. There is plenty of time to deal with them. Neither is replaced, in order to have the

11 mows completely cleared towards the beginning of February. The field is then watered to soften the ground, and when the water is absorbed, the clover is turned up and buried by the first ploughing. Two or three days later, a second and last ploughing takes place, and the transplanting of the fifth harvest proceeds.

This comprises 7 mows of corn, sometimes replaced by barley, and 4 mows of peas or haricots, but oftener peas. In the rice district, namely in the region of Ouang-Mo-Khi, the corn does not yield so much as in the more northerly districts, where it is the usual crop; there it not unfrequently yields 300 kilos. per mow, and even more. Here perhaps, because the temperature makes it spring up and ripen too quickly, it only yields 150 kilos. at the most, and is sold at 8 francs the 60 kilos.,[1] the same price as the rice. This appears strange, for it is richer in alimentary substance, but it is sufficiently explained by the fact that the population is more accustomed to rice and consumes less corn, and that it has only a current sale in the northern provinces. The 7 mows then yield a sum of 140 francs, besides 30 francs' worth of straw. I must not leave the corn without repairing an omission which I have made in speaking of the preparations to which the seeds of the cereals are submitted. I have forgotten the first of all, the liming. It is said that the object of this is to destroy the eggs and the parasite germs, and particularly the smut, which might be in the seed. It is customary to roll the seed in pulverised lime. In China they mix cinders in equal proportions with the lime.

The bean cultivated is called the *soia*, of which much is heard in Europe, where it was introduced some years ago, on account of its value as food. It is as rich in nitrogenous matter as meat, and is eagerly eaten by animals. In

[1] A very high price.

China, oil, vermicelli or a kind of cheese, is made from it. It does not contain much oil, hardly more than 17 per cent. can be extracted from it, but the oil-cake fetches a good price. A mow produces 153 kilos. of *soia*, that is, 612 kilos. for four mows; this quantity furnishes 104 kilos. of oil, at 45 c. per kilo., or 48 francs; and 500 kilos. of oil-cake, at 8 francs 50 c. per 60 kilos., or 53 francs; which, with 20 francs for the straw, gives altogether 121 francs. Adding the price of the wheat and the peas, we have a total of 291 francs, representing the result of the fifth harvest. The five harvests of the eleven mows of valley land have therefore produced a sum of 1971 francs. When the peas and wheat are harvested, water is immediately let in on the fields, which are then ploughed twice before proceeding to the planting of the rice.

The management of the hill land is more complicated. We must remember that it has an area of eighteen mows, of which five are under ordinary cultivation and the other thirteen planted with tea. But of the latter, two are only planted once a year, and three only twice. Moreover, the leaves are not gathered, and, so that the area should not be unproductive, it is cultivated like the rest of the ground, by planting between the tea shrubs. Three other mows which have reached the third year of planting only give half a crop of tea, but they also give half a crop of cotton or maize. In the five remaining mows in full cultivation, absolutely nothing is grown except the precious shrub. It is with this that we shall concern ourselves first. There are four crops. The first, when the buds begin to open. It must be gathered at once. A quantity of tea is thus obtained which is called bud-tea, much esteemed by the Chinese, who pay as much as 9 francs for 600 grams; but a mow of it does not yield much more. The second crop is the most important. It is gathered twenty or twenty-five days after the first, and produces from 120

to 130 kilos. All the hope of the planter is set upon this crop. Fortunately, it never quite fails. After a short interval this second crop is followed by a third, yielding 61 kilos. per mow, of the value of 70 francs per 60 kilos.

The second strength at length comes, and with it the last crop. It only yields 37 kilos. per mow, at the moderate value of 60 francs per 60 kilos. Thus, at Ouang-Ming-Tse's, the crop of tea, for the five wholly cultivated mows, and for the three partially cultivated, may be shown in the following manner.

1st harvest,	58 kilos.	at	9 frs.	the	600 grams.,	870 frs.
2nd „	940 „		150 „		60 kilos.	2265 „
3rd „	396 „		70 „		60 „	470 „
4th „	240 „		60 „		60 „	240 „

The ordinary cultivation of the hills occupies five mows irrigated, and five mows planted with trees too young to bear, but in the spaces between which other things are cultivated. But Ouang-Ming-Tse has diverted the water from two of the first five; one has been made into a garden, and another into a field of yams. A third is planted with sugar-canes. They are thus exempt from the management and rotation of the ordinary crops, since they bear the same for the greater part of the year, and for this reason we shall leave them until the last. There remain then two mows under irrigation, cultivated in the same manner as the valley land, and five mows watered solely by manual labour.

The two irrigated mows are first planted with ordinary rice, the yield being somewhat less than in the valley, only 365 kilos. per mow. For the second harvest does not consist of transplanted rice for distilling. It is not the custom of the Chinese Government to regard very favourably the diverting of any land from an indispensable production to one less useful. The cultivators, anxious to merit the favour or rewards of the authorities, are there-

fore very careful not to transgress a certain limit. They replace the rice by a kind called mountain rice, which does not require so much water as the others, a serious consideration at a time of the year when it begins to be scarce. It only produces 300 kilos., but it is of the same value as the other, or for the two crops and the two mows 1330 kilos., at 8 francs per 60 kilos., 177 francs. After the rice, rape-seed is transplanted, which produces 300 kilos. for the two mows, or nearly 75 kilos. of oil at 37 c. per kilo., and 215 kilos. of oil-cake at 8 francs 50 c. per kilo. Total, 51 frs. 75 c. Then come 1080 kilos. of clover worth 23 frs.; and finally, 300 kilos. of corn worth 45 francs, including the straw; thus 296 francs represent the whole of the five harvests.

The five mows which are not irrigated are divided into three fields, one of three mows and two others of one mow each. In the first, cotton-seed is sown in rows and patches, or the young cotton plant is transplanted if the tillage is backward. The ground is occupied by the cotton at least three months, from the beginning of May to the beginning of September. To reserve the land for this purpose, nothing is planted after the fifth crop has been gathered; and when the cotton is ripe, it is too late for it to be succeeded by the ordinary crops. This is therefore a troublesome crop and, if the produce is not sold directly, an unprofitable one. But the cotton gives employment during the evenings to the women of the house, who pick and spin it, and to the men, who weave it. This is a compensation. The cotton-plant produces about 90 kilos. of raw cotton per mow, which gives 60 kilos. of picked cotton at 70 c. per kilo., and 27 kilos. of seed at 35 c., added to 90 kilos. of straw worth 1 franc. The three mows then only yield in all 127 frs. 36 c. When woven, the 180 kilos. of cotton becomes 80 pieces of cotton-cloth, valued at 2 frs. 25 c.; and the 80 kilos of seed yield

8 kilos of oil at 45 c. the kilo.; added to 70 kilos. of oil-cake at 7 frs. 50 c. per 60 kilos., making with the straw in all 257 frs. 60 c.

Three or four days after the capsules of the cotton commence to expand, rows of buck-wheat, sown in patches, are planted in the spaces; but these are very far apart, and are left to themselves until the cotton is gathered. Consequently a mow yields very little, hardly 60 kilos., worth 5 francs, and 1 franc for the straw; or 18 francs for the three mows. After the buck-wheat, a crop of clover is sown, yielding 1620 kilos. the three mows, worth 35 francs; and finally, a crop of corn of 450 kilos. at 8 francs per 60 kilos.; or 66 francs with the straw.

From off the two remaining mows 180 kilos. of tobacco-leaves are obtained at 60 c. per kilo., making 108 frs. 60 c.; then 4000 kilos. of sorghum stems, cultivated for forage, at 2 francs per 60 kilos., making 132 francs; then 2600 kilos. of turnips at 1 franc per 60 kilos., making 43 francs; 540 kilos. of clover at 11 francs; and lastly, 150 kilos. of corn at 20 francs.

Finally, the last mow produces 160 kilos. of maize at 6 francs per 60 kilos., 16 francs; 4000 kilos. stalks and leaves of soia at 2 francs 20 c. for 60 kilos., 145; 4000 kilos. of cabbages at 95 c. per 60 kilos., 62 francs; 540 kilos of clover, 11 francs; and 150 kilos of corn, 20 francs.

The three mows now remaining are cultivated in yams, sugar-canes, and as a garden. The yams yield 5000 kilos. per mow, which are sold at 4 frs. per 60. kilos., or 333 frs.; but the land has been occupied by them during the greater part of two years. That only leaves then, 1665 francs to add to the result of the annual crops. The sugar-cane requires a particular manure; the ordinary manure alone does not suit it, but diminishes the quantity of sugar contained in the canes. It is therefore alternated with ashes, and even with ashes prepared expressly by

burning sea-weed, heaped up and covered over with earth in such a manner that the burning is accomplished, so to speak, in a closed kiln. A mow of sugar cultivated in this way and plentifully watered yields 4600 kilos. of cane, or 230 kilos. of 25 c. per kilo., or 57 fr. 50 c. The residue may be valued at 8 francs. Total, 65 frs. 50 c.

Ouang-Ming-Tse possesses, in the garden or on the border of the fields, 7 hemp palms, 4 orange-trees, 6 tallow-trees, 3 oil-trees, and a small grove of bamboos. The palm-trees yield 2 kilos. 500 gms. of tow at 2 c. the kilo; the orange-trees producing 1200 to 1300 oranges at 50 c. per 100, 6 francs. The tallow trees, 60 kilos. of seed at 10 c. per kilo., 6 francs. The 3 oil-trees, 35 kilos. of berries, at 10 c. per kilo., 3 fr. 50c.; and the bamboos yield, either in eatable shoots or in stems from which are made different implements, a value of 10 francs. Total, 31 frs. 50 c. The garden also produces a quantity of vegetables and fruits, but these are all consumed in the house, and do not count.

The seeds of the tallow and oil-trees, being too small in quantity to be worked up at home, are sold in a raw state.

I have said that the direct products of agriculture are not the only profits which the Ouang family gain by their labour. They also possess a buffalo, but not having employment for it all the year, they lend or hire it to a younger son and two or three other agriculturists in the neighbourhood. They thus derive, from 140 days' work at 1 fr. 15 c., a sum of 210 francs. But one very appreciable source of profit is the farmyard. Between each harvest they let loose the pigs, chickens, and ducks into the fields, where they find sufficient food, especially when the latter have been watered, which costs nothing. The farmyard is managed by the women, who attend to it admirably. No one knows better than Mrs. Ouang how

to make and vary according to the seasons the wash which is given to the pigs. No one is cleverer than Mrs. Po-Y in distinguishing good from bad eggs, or in preparing paste for the chickens. The pigs are not reared at the house; that is a special industry. In order that the breed, which is not very large, but which is precocious and fattens easily, may not degenerate, it is sometimes necessary to go a distance for productive animals. It would be impossible to rear all the young of a litter; for which reason it is found easier and more economical to separate the fattening from the rearing. At the Ouang's, as at all other farmers, they fatten four times a year, three pigs at each fattening. They buy the young pigs at six or seven weeks old, and sell them fattened three months after. Each weighs 15 to 16 kilos. and costs 4 frs. 60 c.; after fattening it weighs 112 kilos.; and is worth 32 frs. 50 c. at 29 c. per kilo., or 390 francs for the 12. They never make the animals extremely fat, because that would make the selling price too dear and would never pay.

Mrs. Ouang has two goats, which have each produced two kids; these were sold four months after their birth, at 5 francs each, making 20 francs for the four.

The poultry, of which the fixed number is 12 fowls and 20 ducks, gives 150 chickens or ducklings at 35 c. a dozen, 45 francs; plus 2000 hens' eggs at 35 c. a dozen, and 1500 ducks' eggs at 40 c., 50 francs, the total product of the stable and poultry-yard being 773 francs. It is needless, I think, to say that the hens and chickens are far from being as fine and weighty as ours. They weigh a pound and a-half or two pounds at the outside. If they weigh more they generally command a high price. The production of the second pound costs more than the first. If the value of a chicken of a pound and a-half is 30 or 35 c., one weighing two and a-half pounds will immediately cost 75 or 80 c. To obtain chickens of 5 or 6 pounds it is

either necessary to order them, or to have a tradesman who knows the taste of his customer. However, in the markets of the large towns it is common enough to find poultry weighing 3 or 4 pounds. All the products of the farm are carried or driven to market, or taken away by itinerant buyers who wish to re sell them. Generally the sellers are satisfied with a small profit. For instance, they will give 18 ounces to the pound instead of 16 for the pigs and goats, and 14 eggs to the dozen. In the large towns their profits are greater.

DETAILS OF WORKING-STOCK.

1 plough, 15 frs.; 1 wooden harrow, 12 frs.; 2 large iron rakes at 2 frs. each, 4 frs.; 5 hand hoes, with two teeth, at 1 fr. 50 c., 7 frs. 50 c. 2 large hoes with 4 teeth, at 2 frs. 50 c., 5 francs; 2 sickles at 2 francs 50 c., 5 frs.; 1 box to grind the rice, 15 frs.; 5 pails for fattening, at 5 frs. the pair, 10 frs.; two small pails, at 4 frs. the pair 8 frs.; two large feeding troughs, at 1 fr. 50 c. each, 3 frs.; 2 small, at 1 fr. 10 c., 2 frs. 20 c.; 3 large jars for food, at 7 frs. each, 21 francs; 2 shovels, at 2 francs each, 4 frs.; 2 flails, at 2 frs. 25 c. each, 4 frs. 50 c.; 2 poles for carrying the pails, at 1 fr. 25 c., 2 fr. 50 c. Total, 208 frs. 70 c. These are the farming instruments. Now follow those for grinding and preparing the grain.

1 hard wooden mill to husk the rice, 10 fr.; 1 brass fan-machine, 12 frs.; 2 sieves, at 1 fr. 25 c., 2 frs. 50 c.; 1 stone flour-mill, 18 frs.; 1 mortar and pestle, 15 frs. Total, 57 frs. 50 c.

Then the utensils for preparing the tea: 4 brick furnaces, at 12 frs., 48 frs.; 4 iron basons, at 6 frs., 24 frs.; 50

mats on which to spread out the tea, at 1 fr., 50 frs.; 4 small wooden shovels at 25 c., 1 fr. Total, 123 frs.

Instruments for the preparation of the cotton and weaving: 1 loom, 9 frs.; 2 spinning machines, at 3 frs., 6 frs.; 1 weaving machine, 28 frs. Total, 40 frs.

Lastly, 1 oil mill, 18 frs.; 1 press, 40 frs.; 1 stone mill to crush the sugar canes, 40 frs.; 3 boilers, at 7 frs., 21 frs.; and 2 iron spoons, at 3 frs., 6 frs. Total, 125 frs.

I was about to forget a chopping-knife for forage, 20 frs.; and 4 tubs for preparing the animals' food, at 3 frs., 12 frs.

These various additional sums give a total of 578 frs. 20 c., or, at 10 per cent., 58 francs for the interest of the material.

DETAILS OF THE COST OF FOOD.—HOUSE.

The principal expenses for food can be shown as follows: 5000 kilos. of rice at 8 frs. per 60 kilos., 664 frs.; 250 kilos. of corn at 8 frs. per 60 kilos., 32 frs.; 150 kilos. of soia-beans, for making vermicelli and cheese called *Tou-wou*, at 18 c. per kilo., reckoned as if it had served for the manufacture of oil, 27 frs.; salt cabbages and turnips, 800 kilos. at 1 fr. per 60 kilos., together 18 frs.; dried vegetables, 100 kilos. at 20 frs. for 60 kilos. 28 frs.; fresh vegetables, haricots, apples, etc., 500 kilos., at 4 frs. per 60 kilos., 34 frs.; sea-weed, at 15 francs per 60 kilos., 180 kilos, 45 frs.; fish, prawns, mussels, crabs, dried or salted, 420 kilos. at 27 frs. for 60 kilos., 189 frs.; fresh fish, 400 kilos. at 4 frs. 50 c. per 60 kilos., 30 frs.; 110 kilos. of fresh pork, at 34 c. per kilo., 32 frs.; salt pork, and ham, 50 kilos. at 1 fr. the kilo., 50 frs.; mutton or kid, 40 kilos. at 25 c. per kilo., 8 frs.; 150 chickens or ducks, at 30 c. each, 45 frs.; pork-dripping, 120 kilos. at

75 c., 90 frs.; 450 hens' eggs, at 35 c. the dozen, 14 fr. 15 c.; 450 ducks' eggs, at 40 c. the dozen, 15 frs. 40 c.; 60 kilos. of dried mushrooms, 20 francs; oil for eating or burning, 200 kilos. at 45 c. per kilo., 90 francs; salt, 120 kilos., which includes that which is used for salting and that which is given to the animals, at 3 frs. per 60 kilos., 7 frs.; sugar, 90 kilos. at 25 c. per kilo., 22 frs. 50 c.; wine, 100 kilos. at 10 frs. 50 c. for 60 kilos., 17 frs.; straw to burn in the kitchen, fruits and liqueurs, calculated at 50 frs. Total for food expenses, 1589 frs.

STABLE, FARM-YARD, AND PIGGERY.

The buffalo's food varies with the seasons, but whatever it may be, some kind of wash is given to him; that is to say, the straw, clover, fresh or dry sorghum, turnips, oil-cake, etc., are always minced or cut in small pieces and mixed with a little water and salt. His year's allowance is 6500 kilos. of rice-straw, at 65 c. per 60 kilos., 60 frs. 20 c.; 2000 kilos. of clover, at 1 fr. 20 c. per 60 kilos., 39 frs. 60 c.; 5000 kilos. of turnips, at 1 fr. per 60 kilos, 83 frs. 70 c.; 1000 kilos. of soia-forage, at 2 fr. 20 c. per 60 kilos., 33 frs. 70 c.; 450 kilos. of oil-cake, at 8 fr. 50 c. per 60 kilos., 63 fr. 75 c. Total, 311 frs. 20 c., without counting 3000 kilos. or more of refuse of all sorts, husks of rice or corn, bran, small grain, etc., which could not be otherwise employed.

The pigs have also consumed, in the shape of wash, 1590 kilos. of turnips, at 8 frs. 50 c. per 60 kilos., 25 frs.: 450 kilos. of sorghum and refuse of sugar-cane, at 2 frs. 20 c. per 60 kilos., 55 frs. Total, 143 frs., without counting a very considerable quantity of leavings and refuse of all sorts, husks of rice and corn, bran, small grains, vegetables,

peels and parings of yams, etc. etc., which cannot be estimated at less than 4000 kilos., which are found by them in the fields.

A large portion of the food which is given to the hens and chickens is likewise made into paste. They have received in that way or in a raw state, 120 kilos. of sarrazin or black corn at 5 frs. per 60 kilos.; 100 kilos. of oil-cake at 8 frs. 50 c., 14 frs.; 100 kilos. of broad-beans at 11 frs., 10 frs.; 100 kilos. of maize at 6 frs., 10 frs.; 250 kilos. of rice at 8 frs. 33 c; 180 kilos. of yams at 4 frs., 12 frs. Total, 98 frs., without counting 4 to 500 kilos. of leavings, and what they find when the harvests are reaped.

As for the goats, it is estimated that the milk which they furnish, and which is entirely consumed in the house, is equivalent to the food which they receive. It would be more correct to say that no account is taken with them. That is a delusion of Mrs. Po-Y, who requires the milk for the children. The entire cost of the animals' food amounts then to 552 frs. 20 c.

INVENTORY OF FURNITURE.

The long drawing-room table is valued at 45 frs.; the square table at 36 frs.; the vases and the candlesticks, 70 frs.: the trunk, 30 frs.; the book-case, 30 frs.; the arm-chairs and the two round tables, 110 frs.; the other chairs or stools, 10 in number, 40 frs.: Total, 361 frs. In the other rooms are three large beds, at 138 frs. each, 414 frs.; two children's beds, at 30 frs., 60 frs.; and a baby's cot, 10 frs. All these beds are furnished in rattan, on which the mattresses, or rather the bedclothes, are put, for they have no mattresses like ours. In place of the latter the bedclothes are doubled and form a thick padded bed.

They put two of them at 20 frs. each on the larger beds, and at 12 frs. on the small ones, or for the 8 beds, 240 frs. In hot weather, in place of lying directly on this species of mattress, the latter are covered with a fine mat. Each bed possesses one which is valued at from 1 to 2 frs. It is the general custom to wear a pair of drawers in the night and an under-waistcoat. Each bed is also provided with a mosquito-net—for the 3 large beds, 20 frs. each; and the 5 others, 12 frs.; making 120 frs. for the 8. The beds furnished as I have shown, then cost altogether 850 frs. Therefore it is obvious that the bed is a heavy article of expense, but, with the grave, it is that to which the Chinese attach the most importance. There are beds and graves which cost several thousands of francs.

After the beds come 4 presses in the rooms of the grandmother, her grand-daughter Sui-Lieu, and Ouang-Ming Tse. The first valued at 50 frs.; the two others at 40 and 36 frs.; and the last at 20 frs. Then 8 leather or camphor-wood chests, at 10 to 12 frs. each, or 90 frs.; 3 large round tables and 1 square table, worth about 65 frs. the four; 4 large toilet-tables, with water-jugs and basons in tin or porcelain. The former at 35 frs. each, and the latter at 15 frs., making, two at 35 and two at 15 frs., 100 frs. The three ladies and the young girl each have a dressing-case worth 10 frs. each, 40 frs., and a looking-glass at 3 frs. Lastly, we find in these four rooms 2 large arm-chairs, and 10 chairs, together valued at 120 frs.; 8 small tin candlesticks at 2 frs. 40 c. each, and two copper lamps at 6 frs., or 31 frs. All the furniture is of white varnished wood. The other children's rooms only contain, in addition to the bed, 2 stools at 2 frs. each; a chest at 5 frs.; and a toilet table, with very common porcelain furniture, only worth 6 frs. This makes, for the two rooms, 30 frs. The sum total for this first part of the furniture amounts to 1845 francs.

In the servant's room there is a bed with its clothes and mosquito-net—the whole valued at 50 frs ; also a chest worth 5 frs.; a toilet-table worth 6 frs.; and 2 stools worth 2 frs. Total, 65 francs.

The following is the inventory of the contents of the kitchen: 1 brick stove with 5 hearths, 50 frs.; 5 iron kettles at 3 frs., 15 frs.; 6 iron saucepans at 1 fr., 6 frs.; 3 large copper spoons for stirring the rice, at 2 frs., 6 frs.; 6 small copper spoons at 25 c. 1 fr. 50 c.; 6 smaller ones at 20 c.; 3 iron shovels at 1 fr., 50 c., 4 fr. 50 c.; 2 pairs of tongs at 1 fr. 25 c., 2 frs. 50 c. 5 copper lids at 2 frs., 10 frs.; 4 large water-jars at 8 frs., 32 frs.; 6 preserving-jars at 7 frs., 42 francs; 2 kitchen cupboards at 16 frs., 32 frs.; 2 tables at 5 frs., 10 frs.; 1 block for chopping meat, 6 frs.; 50 common bowls, 3 frs. for the whole; 50 china saucers, 6 frs.; 20 large cups, 7 frs.; 30 ordinary cups, 8 frs.; 40 tea-cups and saucers, 6 frs. 50 c.; 40 small wine-cups, 2 frs.,; 50 china spoons, 2 frs. 50 c.; 40 pairs of eating troughs in hard wood, 1 fr. 50 c.; 40 pairs in bamboo, 75 c.; 2 large kitchen-knives at 1 fr. 25 c., 2 frs. 50 c.; 6 bamboo baskets at 1 fr. 10 c., 6 fr. 60 c.; 6 scuttles at 3 frs., 18 frs.; 4 smaller scuttles at 2 fr. 40 c., 9 fr. 60 c.; 6 varnished wooden bowls at 2 frs., 12 frs.; 4 stools at 1 fr. 50 c., 6 frs.; and 4 bamboo chairs at 60 c., 2 frs. 40 c. The total value of the kitchen furniture, 314 frs.

INVENTORY OF CLOTHES.

Men's dressing-room: 3 felt hats for ceremony, ornamented with red silk tassels, with cords and satin inside, at 8 frs each, 24 frs.; 3 hats of ordinary felt at 2 frs., 6 frs.; 5 small caps in common felt, at 75 c., 3 frs. 75 c.; 5 dress caps of satin, with tassels of red silk, at 2 frs. 25 c., 11 frs. 25 c.;

5 satin dress cravats, at 1 fr., 85 c., 9 fr. 25 c.; 20 cotton shirts at 2 frs., 40 francs (these shirts are rather fronts in shape); 20 pairs of cotton trowsers at 1 fr. 75 c., 35 frs.; 5 pairs wadded and quilted for wearing under the trowsers, at 6 frs., 30 francs; 4 large working-aprons shaped like a petticoat, similar to those worn by our brewers, at 6 frs., 24 frs.; 4 large working-trowsers, for the winter, at 7 frs., 28 frs.; 4 great wadded overcoats (ta koua) at 12 francs, 48 frs.; 3 wadded and quilted gowns or tunics, for the three men, at 22 frs., 66 frs.; 2 gowns, ditto, for the little boys, at 16 frs., 32 frs.; 6 large cotton tunics at 11 frs., 66 frs.; 3 small tunics at 9 francs, 27 frs.; 3 blue silk tunics at 40 frs., 120 francs; 3 cloth tippets or camails (ma koua) at 12 frs., 36 frs.; 3 pairs of silk leggings at 7 frs., 21 frs.; 3 large silk girdles at 4 frs., 50 c., 13 frs. 50 c.; 6 cotton waistbands at 2 frs., 12 frs.; 3 cloth tippets or camails, furred with sheep-skin, at 36 frs., 108 frs.; 3 furred waistcoats or cassocks at 21 frs., 63 frs.; 3 large wadded waistcoats at 9 frs., 27 frs., 3 small ditto at 6 frs., 18 frs.; 20 pairs of sewn cotton cloth stockings at 1 fr. 25 c., 25 frs.; 10 pairs of ordinary shoes in coarse taffeta at 3 frs. 40 c., 34 frs.; 5 pairs of satin dress shoes at 5 frs., 25 frs.; 10 pairs of wooden shoes, large or small, at 2 frs., 20 frs.; 4 oiled paper umbrellas at 2 frs. 80 c., 11 frs. 20 c.; two working cloaks in palm thread for the rain, at 6 frs., 18 frs.; 2 pairs of gold watches at 72 frs. the pair (the Chinese hardly ever buy a single watch, they are sold in double cases) 144 frs.; 6 fans at 75 c. each, 4 frs. 50 c. Total, 1150 francs, 45 c.

Dressing-room of the three ladies and of the three young girls: 3 silver hair-pins at 7 frs. 50 c., 22 frs. 50 c.; 3 small ones at 3 frs. 20 c., 9 frs. 60 c.; 2 pins in common jade at 12 frs., 24 frs.; 5 silver rings, together worth 50 frs.; 4 pairs of silver ear-rings at 9 frs., 36 frs.; 6 silver bracelets, together 110 frs.; 2 pairs of jade ear-rings at

15 frs., 30 frs.; 2 jade bracelets, together 40 frs.; 3 coiffures of false hair at 3 frs. 50 c., 10 frs. 50 c.; a lot of 30 artificial flowers, 20 frs.; 6 satin bonnets, small or large, at 3 frs., 18 frs.; 24 cotton chemises at 2 frs., 48 frs.; 24 cotton drawers at 1 fr. 50 c., 36 frs.; 10 petticoats at 5 frs., 50 frs.; 4 silk overcoats at 10 frs., 40 frs.; 4 silk dresses at 36 frs., 144 frs.; 3 dresses—more beautiful—at 50 frs., 150 frs.; 6 beautiful silk sashes at 10 frs., 60 frs.; 4 wadded silk trowsers, for great personages, at 14 frs., 56 frs.; 2—smaller—at 9 frs., 18 frs.; 4 wadded cotton overcoats at 10 frs., 40 frs.; 4 wadded silk dresses at 45 frs., 180 frs.; 4 silk waistcoats, for great personages, at 11 frs.; 2 small ones at 7 frs., 14 frs.; 3 silk waistcoats, lined with sheep-skin—very beautiful—at 24 frs., 72 frs.; 4 cotton cloaks or large overcoats, for rain, at 10 frs., 40 frs.; 12 aprons at 50 c., 6 frs.; 6 dress aprons at 4 frs., 24 frs.; 15 pairs of shoes at 2 frs. 50 c., 37 frs. 50 c.; 6 pairs of shoes—more beautiful—at 4 frs., 24 frs.; 4 umbrellas at 2 frs. 50 c., 10 frs.; 6 common fans at 25 c., 1 fr. 50 c.; 4—more beautiful—at 2 fr. 50 c., 10 frs. As for the baby, all its little garments are worth about 50 frs. Total, 1525 frs. 60 c., which, joined to the total of 1150 frs. 45 c. of the men's dressing-room, make a total of 2676 frs.

APPENDIX II.

TABLE I.—THE SOCIETY OF THE KIANG-SU.

1st Meeting.		2nd Meeting.		3rd Meeting.		4th Meeting.		5th Meeting.		6th Meeting.		7th Meeting.		8th Meeting.		9th Meeting.		10th Meeting.		11th Meeting.	
Sums paid to the 1st Member.		Sums paid to the 2nd Member.		Sums paid to the 3rd Member.		Sums paid to the 4th Member.		Sums paid to the 5th Member.		Sums paid to the 6th Member.		Sums paid to the 7th Member.		Sums paid to the 8th Member.		Sums paid to the 9th Member.		Sums paid to the 10th Member.		Sums paid to the 11th Member.	
By the	Taels	By the	Taels	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.
2nd	14.5	1st	14.5	1st	13.5	1st	12.5	1st	11.5	1st	10.5	1st	9.5	1st	8.5	1st	3.5	1st	6.5	1st	5.5
3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5
4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5
5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5
6th	10.5	6th	10.5	6th	10.5	6th	10.5	6th	10.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5
7th	9.5	7th	9.5	7th	9.5	7th	9.5	7th	9.5	7th	9.5	6th	10.5	6th	10.5	6th	10.5	6th	10.5	6th	10.5
8th	8.5	8th	8.5	8th	8.5	8th	8.5	8th	8.5	8th	8.5	8th	8.5	7th	9.5	7th	9.5	7th	9.5	7th	9.5
9th	7.5	9th	7.5	9th	7.5	9th	7.5	9th	7.5	9th	7.5	9th	7.5	9th	7.5	8th	8.5	8th	8.5	8th	8.5
10th	6.5	10th	6.5	10th	6.5	10th	6.5	10th	6.5	10th	6.5	10th	6.5	10th	6.5	10th	6.5	9th	7.5	9th	7.5
11th	5.5	11th	5.5	11th	5.5	11th	5.5	11th	5.5	11th	5.5	11th	5.5	11th	5.5	11th	5.5	11th	5.5	10th	6.5
	100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100

A tael is an ingot of silver worth 8 francs.

Table II.—The Series of the Society of Sou-Tchou.

1st Meeting.		2nd Meeting.		3rd Meeting.		4th Meeting.		5th Meeting.		6th Meeting.		7th Meeting.		8th Meeting.		9th Meeting.		10th Meeting.		11th Meeting.	
Sums paid to the 1st Member.		Sums paid to the 2nd Member.		Sums paid to the 3rd Member.		Sums paid to the 4th Member.		Sums paid to the 5th Member.		Sums paid to the 6th Member.		Sums paid to the 7th Member.		Sums paid to the 8th Member.		Sums paid to the 9th Member.		Sums paid to the 10th Member.		Sums paid to the 11th Member.	
By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.
2nd	15.5	1st	15.5	1st	15.5	1st	15.5	1st	15.5	1st	15.5	1st	15.5	1st	15.5	1st	15.5	1st	15.5	1st	15.5
3rd	14.5	3rd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5	2nd	14.5
4th	13.5	4th	13.5	4th	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5	3rd	13.5
5th	12.5	5th	12.5	5th	12.5	5th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5	4th	12.5
6th	11.5	6th	11.5	6th	11.5	6th	11.5	6th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5	5th	11.5
7th	8.5	7th	8.5	7th	8.5	7th	8.5	7th	8.5	7th	8.5	6th	8.5	6th	8.5	6th	8.5	6th	8.5	6th	8.5
8th	7.5	8th	7.5	8th	7.5	8th	7.5	8th	7.5	8th	7.5	8th	7.5	7th	7.5	7th	7.5	7th	7.5	7th	7.5
9th	6.5	9th	6.5	9th	6.5	9th	6.5	9th	6.5	9th	6.5	9th	6.5	9th	6.5	8th	6.5	8th	6.5	8th	6.5
10th	5.5	10th	5.5	10th	5.5	10th	5.5	10th	5.5	10th	5.5	10th	5.5	10th	5.5	10th	5.5	9th	5.5	9th	5.5
11th	4.5	11th	4.5	11th	4.5	11th	4.5	11th	4.5	11th	4.5	11th	4.5	11th	4.5	11th	4.5	10th	4.5	10th	4.5
	100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100

Z

TABLE III.—THE SERIES OF THE SOCIETY OF SCHÉ-KONG.

1st Meeting.		2nd Meeting.		3rd Meeting.		4th Meeting.		5th Meeting.		6th Meeting.		7th Meeting.		8th Meeting.		9th Meeting.		10th Meeting.		11th Meeting.	
Sums paid to the 1st Member.		Sums paid to the 2nd Member.		Sums paid to the 3rd Member.		Sums paid to the 4th Member.		Sums paid to the 5th Member.		Sums paid to the 6th Member.		Sums paid to the 7th Member.		Sums paid to the 8th Member.		Sums paid to the 9th Member.		Sums paid to the 10th Member.		Sums paid to the 11th Member.	
By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.
2nd	6	1st	15	1st	15	1st	15	1st	15	1st	15	2nd	13.8	3rd	15	4th	15	5th	12	6th	9.6
3rd	6	3rd	4.99	2nd	15	2nd	15	2nd	15	2nd	13.8	3rd	10.2	4th	9	5th	12	6th	11.4	7th	11.4
4th	6	4th	4.99	3rd	3.750	3rd	15	3rd	15	3rd	10.2	4th	10.8	5th	10.2	6th	10.2	7th	11.4	8th	12.6
5th	6	5th	4.99	5th	3.750	5th	2.144	4th	15	4th	10.2	5th	12.6	6th	10.8	7th	10.8	8th	12.6	9th	13.8
6th	6	6th	4.99	6th	3.750	6th	2.144	6th	..	5th	10.8	6th	12.6	7th	15	8th	12	9th	12.6	10th	12.6
7th	6	7th	4.99	7th	3.750	7th	2.144	7th	..	7th	..	8th	..	..	..	10th	..	11th			
8th	6	8th	4.99	8th	3.750	8th	2.144	8th	..	8th	..	9th	..	..	..	11th					
9th	6	9th	4.99	9th	3.750	9th	2.144	9th	..	9th	..	10th									
10th	6	10th	4.99	10th	3.750	10th	2.144	10th	..	10th	..	11th									
11th	6	11th	4.99	11th	3.750	11th	2.144	11th	...	11th											
	60		60		60		60		60		60		60		60		60		60		60

Table IV.—The Series of the Society of Tchao-Kong.

1st Meeting.		2nd Meeting.		3rd Meeting.		4th Meeting.		5th Meeting.		6th Meeting.		7th Meeting.		8th Meeting.		9th Meeting.		10th Meeting.		11th Meeting.		12th Meeting.	
Sums paid to the 1st Member.		Sums paid to the 2nd Member.		Sums paid to the 3rd Member.		Sums paid to the 4th Member.		Sums paid to the 5th Member.		Sums paid to the 6th Member.		Sums paid to the 7th Member.		Sums paid to the 8th Member.		Sums paid to the 9th Member.		Sums paid to the 10th Member.		Sums paid to the 11th Member.		Sums paid to the 12th Member.	
By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.	By the	Ligatures and Sapèques.
2nd	5	1st	15	1st	15.000	1st	15.000	1st	15	1st	..	1st	..	1st	..	1st	..	1st	..	1st	..	2nd	
3rd	5	3rd	3.89	2nd	15.000	2nd	15.000	2nd	15	2nd	15	2nd	..	2nd	..	2nd	..	2nd	..	2nd	..	3rd	
4th	5	4th	3.89	4th	2.500	3rd	15.000	3rd	15	4th	15	3rd	15	3rd	..	3th	..	3rd	..	3rd	..	4th	
5th	5	5th	3.89	5th	2.500	5th	.713	4th	15	5th	15	4th	15	4th	15	4th	..	4th	..	4th	..	5th	
6th	5	6th	3.89	6th	2.500	6th	.713	6th	..	7th	15	5th	15	5th	15	5th	15	5th	..	5th	..	6th	
7th	5	7th	3.89	7th	2.500	7th	.713	7th	..	8th	..	6th	15	6th	15	6th	15	6th	15	6th	..	7th	
8th	5	8th	3.89	8th	2.500	8th	.713	8th	..	9th	..	7th	..	7th	15	7th	15	7th	15	7th	15	8th	15
9th	5	9th	3.89	9th	2.500	9th	.713	9th	..	10th	..	8th	..	9th	..	8th	15	8th	15	8th	15	9th	15
10th	5	10th	3.89	10th	2.500	10th	.713	10th	..	11th	..	9th	..	10th	..	10th	..	9th	15	9th	15	10th	15
11th	5	11th	3.89	11th	2.500	11th	.713	11th	..	..	..	11th	..	11th	..	11th	..	11th	..	10th	15	11th	15
	50		50.01		50		49.991		60		60		60		60		60		60		60		60

The ligature contains 1000 Sapèques, and is of the value of 5 frs. in round numbers. 10 Sapaquès are worth 5 centimes.

Table V.—The Series of the Common and Simple Society.

1st Meeting.		2nd Meeting.		3rd Meeting.		4th Meeting.		5th Meeting.		6th Meeting.		7th Meeting.		8th Meeting.		9th Meeting.		10th Meeting.		11th Meeting.	
Sums paid to the 1st Member.		Sums paid to the 2nd Member.		Sums paid to the 3rd Member.		Sums paid to the 4th Member.		Sums paid to the 5th Member.		Sums paid to the 6th Member.		Sums paid to the 7th Member.		Sums paid to the 8th Member.		Sums paid to the 9th Member.		Sums paid to the 10th Member.		Sums paid to the 11th Member.	
By the	Tael	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.	By the	Tael.
2nd	5	1st	7	1st	7	1st	7	1st	7	1st	7	1st	7	1st	7	1st	7	1st	7	1st	7
3rd	5	3rd	5	2nd	7	2nd	7	2nd	7	2nd	7	2nd	7	2nd	7	2nd	7	2nd	7	2nd	7
4th	5	4th	5	4th	5	3rd	7	3rd	7	3rd	7	3rd	7	3rd	7	3rd	7	3rd	7	3rd	7
5th	5	5th	5	5th	5	5th	5	4th	7	4th	7	4th	7	4th	7	4th	7	4th	7	4th	7
6th	5	6th	5	6th	5	6th	5	6th	5	5th	7	5th	7	5th	7	5th	7	5th	7	5th	7
7th	5	7th	5	7th	5	7th	5	7th	5	7th	5	6th	7	6th	7	6th	7	6th	7	6th	7
8th	5	8th	5	8th	5	8th	5	8th	5	8th	5	8th	5	7th	7	7th	7	7th	7	7th	7
9th	5	9th	5	9th	5	9th	5	9th	5	9th	5	9th	5	9th	5	8th	7	8th	7	8th	7
10th	5	10th	5	10th	5	10th	5	10th	5	10th	5	10th	5	10th	5	10th	5	9th	7	9th	7
11th	5	11th	5	11th	5	11th	5	11th	5	11th	5	11th	5	11th	5	11th	5	11th	5	10th	7
	50		52		54		56		58		60		62		64		66		68		70

Table VI.—The Series of the Society of Tche-Kong.

1st Meeting.		2nd Meeting.		3rd Meeting.		4th Meeting.		5th Meeting.		6th Meeting.		7th Meeting.		8th Meeting.		9th Meeting.		10th Meeting.		11th Meeting.		12th Meeting.	
Sums paid to the 1st Member.		Sums paid to the 2nd Member.		Sums paid to the 3rd Member.		Sums paid to the 4th Member.		Sums paid to the 5th Member.		Sums paid to the 6th Member.		Sums paid to the 7th Member.		Sums paid to the 8th Member.		Sums paid to the 9th Member.		Sums paid to the 10th Member.		Sums paid to the 11th Member.		Sums paid to the 12th Member.	
By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.
2nd	10	1st	20	1st	20	1st	20	1st	20	1st	20	1st	20										
3rd	10	3rd	8.89	2nd	20	2nd	20	2nd	20	2nd	20	2nd	20	2nd	20								
4th	10	4th	8.89	3rd	7.5	3rd	20	3rd	20	3rd	20	3rd	20	3rd	20	3rd	20						
5th	10	5th	8.89	5th	7.5	5th	5.716	4th	20	4th	20	4th	20	4th	20	4th	20	4th	20				
6th	10	6th	8.89	6th	7.5	6th	5.716	6th	3.334	6th	20	5th	20	5th	20	5th	20	5th	20	5th	20	6th	20
7th	10	7th	8.89	7th	7.5	7th	5.716	7th	3.334	7th	..	6th	20	6th	20	6th	20	6th	20	6th	20	7th	20
8th	10	8th	8.89	8th	7·5	8th	5.716	8th	3.334	8th	..	8th	..	7th	20	7th	20	7th	20	7th	20	8th	20
9th	10	9th	8.89	9th	7.5	9th	5.716	9th	3.334	9th	..	9th	..	9th	..	8th	20	8th	20	8th	20	9th	20
10th	10	10th	8.89	10th	7.5	10th	5.716	10th	3.334	10th	..	10th	..	10th	..	9th	..	9th	20	9th	20	10th	20
11th	10	11th	8.89	11th	7.5	11th	5.716	11th	3.334	11th	..	11th	..	11th		10th	..	10th	..	10th	20	11th	20
	100		100.01		100		100·012		100·004		100		120		120		120		120		120		120

TABLE VII.—THE SERIES OF THE SOCIETY OF TSI-HIENN-HOUEI.

1st Meeting.		2nd Meeting.		3rd Meeting.		4th Meeting.		5th Meeting.		6th Member.		7th Meeting.	
Sums paid to the 1st Member.		Sums paid to the 2nd Member.		Sums paid to the 3rd Member.		Sums paid to the 4th Member.		Sums paid to the 5th Member.		Sums paid to the 6th Member.		Sums paid to the 7th Member.	
By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.	By the	Taels.
2nd	3.333	1st	6	1st	6	1st	6	1st	6	2nd	6	3rd	6
3rd	3.333	3rd	2.8	2nd	6	2nd	6	2nd	6	3rd	6	4th	6
4th	3.333	4th	2.8	4th	2	3rd	6	3rd	6	4th	6	5th	6
5th	3.333	5th	2.8	5th	2	5th	.667	4th	6	5th	6	6th	6
6th	3.333	6th	2.8	6th	2	6th	.667	6th	..	7th			
7th	3.333	7th	2.8	7th	2	7th	.667	7th					

A Tael is an ingot of silver worth 8 francs.

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